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MAN'S EXPERIENCE

OF

THE HOLY

A DISSERTATION

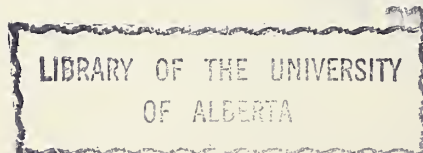
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BY

LYLE BRIAN JONES, B.A.

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

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## PREFACE

Over the years many questions have been asked and many answers proposed with respect to the origins of religious experience.

Many Sociologists for example, contend that religion arises out of the interpersonal relationships which man experiences in community. Since man and his environment comprise the sphere of the social scientist's observation, it is only natural that he should define religion in these terms. The tendency among Sociologists is to describe religion in terms of the function which it appears to fulfil in the social situation. He cannot ignore religion certainly, since there has not been a culture without religion thus far discovered. Looking at man in society objectively, some social scientists have said, that religion provides the means whereby society may be held together. Religion in these terms is a kind of cement which helps to frame the social structure. It is evident, say others, that religion provides for man in society, a common orientation to reality. A common understanding, or at least some agreement as to the purpose in life in the universe, is needed if society is to function harmoniously. The spring of religion from this point of view is out of the need for a philosophy to give meaning to man's existence here. It is also said that



religion is needed in times of social crisis. It enables man to adjust to the inevitable and if needs be, to make the supreme sacrifice.

While Sociology studies the dynamics of environment or social pressures in the main, Psychology, another Social Science, makes its primary focus the individual. By research and experiment the Sociologist is able to sift out basic cultural needs which religion is meeting. The Psychologist, by the same token, is able to point out the psychological needs of the individual met by religion. Psychologists have said that man needs to be creative, he needs to feel that he belongs, to know a sense of worth, to express himself, and to reduce tensions. If these psychological needs are not satisfied man becomes maladjusted. It is not difficult to demonstrate the way in which religion and its institution provide the means whereby such need may be met. It has been concluded by many therefore, that religion finds its origin in the mind of man.

Theology is a no less important discipline than Sociology or Psychology and some of its exponents have discussed God and religion apart almost completely from man and his situation. No matter how logical arguments of this nature may be, if man is not given a very real place in the theology, then it is irrelevant - the nerve of action is cut. On the other hand, to say that God is the creation of man and/or society is a little presumptuous. Man is not the author of creation, nor





does he completely determine his own destiny.

If we may count common experience as fact, and I see no reason why not since all we can really know is what we experience, then Theology, Psychology and Sociology have a very real and valid contribution to make. One cannot hold in his hands, or observe objectively, the power and presence of God, a psychological drive or social pressure, yet there are countless millions who will witness to the fact of these in experience. Such forces impinge constantly on the life of man and all contribute to the content of his experience. This we believe is true of religious experience. In the chapters to follow we shall formulate a thesis and present evidence in its support from the Old Testament, the New Testament, the work of Rudolf Otto, and Mercea Eliade.



## CHAPTER 1

### PROPOSED SOURCES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE AND A THESIS

Certainly the elements and forces at work in human personality are very complex. Man does however, take part in what might be termed, behavior which is uniquely religious, and so we are justified in a search for the sources of religious experience. We might ask these questions: Can religious experience, however complex, be traced back to a single root without which it could not exist? On the other hand, if it should be determined that the sources are many, which of these sources is basic in a purely religious experience and which simply modify and influence the form and manner of expression? Well, let us look at what has been said by a number of very competent men, and then formulate a thesis of our own.

#### 1. Rationalistic Theory

In spite of the complexity of the human spirit a number of scholars have said that religious experience arises from a single spring. In the middle ages as well as in succeeding years, particularly in the time of the Enlightenment, religion was thought by some to be a particular expression of the life



of reason. Not least among the Rationalistic School was the great preacher and teacher Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274).

Thomas was very productive in his writings and two of his greatest works are Summa Contra Gentiles and his Summa Theologica. In the latter work he proposes that the existence of God may be proved logically.

#### Man's Knowledge of God, His Nature and Activity:

"Man may have a threefold knowledge of divine things", says Thomas. "The first is what he gains by the natural light of reason when he ascends through creatures to God. The second is when divine truth exceeding human understanding descends to us by way of revelation, not as it were proved to sight but offered for belief. The third is when the human mind is raised to a perfect insight into the things that are revealed." <sup>1</sup>

Certainly proof of God's existence falls into the first mentioned category. Thomas was completely convinced that knowledge of God's existence and of His nature could be found by natural reason - proved on Aristotelian principles. Rejecting Anselm's ontological proof from the idea of the most perfect being and rejecting also the notion that the idea of God is inborn or that it is self-evident and needs no proof, he confined himself to the argument from effect to cause. Though we cannot perceive God we can know that he exists as we perceive the effects of His activity in the world about us.

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<sup>1</sup> A.C. McGiffert; The History of Christian Thought, Vol.II, Charles Scribners' Sons, New York; London, 1954. P.260.





Among these effects which cannot adequately be accounted for is that of motion. Thomas maintained in agreement with Aristotle, that only by tracing it back to an unmoved mover can movement be intelligently explained. This he does after a lengthy discussion to determine that objects are not self moved but remain at rest until moved from without.<sup>2</sup> Thomas develops variations of the effect to cause proof for God's existence in his argument from order in the universe to an intelligent governor, and also from the existence of various degrees of perfection to a supreme being who is absolutely perfect.

Having shown God to exist as the unmoved mover Thomas proceeds to put meat on these bones by defining God's nature. He proposes that God transcends time, that he is perfect, he is also will and has no passions.

God is eternal argues Aquinas, for there is time only where there is change. There is no change in the unmoved mover so he must therefore transcend time. God is perfect, for imperfection implies potentiality which does not attach to God. Being perfect God is good, for goodness is necessarily included in perfection. It follows, that being perfect - He is necessarily perfect goodness - the supreme good or 'summum bonum'. In the same way God is infinite in power, in essence, intelligence and in knowledge. God is also will, for a mind that knows the good must will it. He has no passion both

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<sup>2</sup> William Brenton; The Summa Theologica of Saint Thomas Aquinas, Vol.I, published Chicago 1952. P.12.



because he is pure actuality without any mixture of potentiality, and because passions are rooted in the sensitive appetites which God is wholly without. At the same time he knows joy, delight and happiness. In fact as the most perfect of beings he must necessarily be the happiest of all. After defining the nature of God in this way Thomas then proposes that it should be the chief end of every intelligent being to understand God. Man finds true happiness not in bodily pleasures, or in wealth or glory or power or even virtue, but in the contemplation of God.

In dealing with revelation Thomas goes far beyond the principles of Aristotle but in a very real sense stays within the bounds of reason. Anything like a direct vision of God was certainly not entertained by him and was quite outside his theory of knowledge. He bases his argument here on an appeal to authority. A distinction is drawn between the prophet who receives the revelation and other men who accept it on the authority of the prophet, as they accept any other fact which they themselves have not witnessed on the authority of one who has. Thomas believed that there had been no divine revelation since the time of the prophets and apostles. He believed that the prophets were under supernatural control, with their minds being illuminated from above and truth communicated to their minds directly, in addition to the knowledge gained through the senses. Only Moses, greatest of the Old Dispensation, and Paul, greatest of the New, saw the



divine essence of God.<sup>3</sup> Man will see and understand God completely in the future life, when he shall be freed from his corporeal nature. It is important to note too, that although knowledge of God by revelation transcends reason, if valid, it never contradicts her.

Thirdly, the mind of man may be raised to a perfect insight of the revealed by the grace of the Holy Spirit, which is given through faith in Christ. "Grace joins man to the highest good which is God."<sup>4</sup> The effects of grace are justification and salvation. By the grace of God, a free gift, man's sins are forgiven and his mind and soul restored. Eternal life is granted to the man who being freely justified, goes on to deeper understanding and nobler good work by the help of divine grace.

To be more specific, the means ordained for man's salvation are, the incarnation, the work of Christ and the sacraments. Thomas argues that incarnation was necessary to show the possibility of union between God and man; it was the best way to exhibit God's love to man; and an example of virtue was needed such as only a God-man could furnish. Although God might have chosen some other way to save man, Christ's suffering and death could not have been more fitting. Not only is man liberated from sin by this act, but he learns how much God loves him and is incited to return His love. Also from Christ's death we are given an example of obedience,

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid- IIb - 175

<sup>4</sup> Ibid- IIa - 106:1







humility, constancy, justice and other virtues which are necessary to salvation. The benefits of Christ's passion are: the forgiveness of sin, deliverance from the power of Satan, release from punishment, reconciliation with God and the opening of heaven's gates.<sup>5</sup> In keeping with those who went before him, Thomas thought of the sacraments as literally conveying grace in substance to the believer.

Thomas devotes considerable space in his *Summa Theologica* to a discussion of ethics. Here as in his treatment of theology he maintains a distinction between the natural and the revealed. He speaks of theological virtues (faith, hope and charity) as revealed by God and the cardinal or natural virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance) as available to reason apart from revelation. These however, are more a result of man's knowledge of God rather than a means to an understanding of Him. This mention of them will suffice therefore, since it is our purpose at this point to enquire into the sources of man's religious experience.

It is evident from our study of Aquinas that in an age of Enlightenment, he was able to represent religion as a particular expression of the life of reason. Though he recognized the impossibility of proving the doctrines of revealed theology he gave substance to their truth by appeal to authority and also by rationalizing them at least to the degree that they were reasonable if not demonstrable. "To show what his reasons were, so far as they could be discovered

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<sup>5</sup> The History of Christian Thought - P.290.



and thus to justify His ways to men Thomas conceived to be the theologian's paramount duty."<sup>6</sup>

The views of Thomas Aquinas are still held by the Jesuits and other modern exponents of scholasticism, though reason is not thought by many to be the sole source of religion.

## 2. The Romanticist Theory

We have had a sampling of the rationalistic theory of religion; we will now look at a theory which represents the opposite extreme of the pendulum's swing. The Romantic Movement was an attempt to find the real source and spring of the religious consciousness somewhere in the mind below the level at which reflective thought arises, that is, somewhere in the pre-rational or pre-intellectual region.

Obviously this theory was in part a reaction to arid intellectualism, but more important it marks a movement from the "Age of Reason" to the "Age of Feeling". The leading theologian of this age was Friedrich Schleiermacher. His theory of religion found its first famous expression in his Speeches on Religion to its Cultured Despisers published in 1799, and especially in the second speech, entitled "The Nature of Religion".

The argument in the speech on the nature of religion begins by dwelling on the impossibility of identifying religion either with science or philosophy on the one hand, or with morals on the other. To do this would make it an "instinct

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid. P.293.





craving for a mess of metaphysical or ethical crumbs". Religion he says, resigns all claims on anything that belongs to science or morals. The scientist may set God at the apex of his religious knowledge; the philosopher may insist that God is represented in the nature of the first cause, but this is not the way in which the religious man knows God - religion is essentially feeling.

Psychology teaches us that there are three essential elements in all mental life: perception, feeling, and activity. Schleiermacher's central position is that perception issues in knowledge, in the scientific life; feeling issues in religion; and the third mentioned, activity, in the moral life. According to Schleiermacher's psychology then, mental life begins in a purely passive reception of impression from the surrounding universe - it begins with feeling (intuition). John Baillie states Schleiermacher's theory thus:

feeling as the affective or pleasure pain element in consciousness, is to be identified with that primordial phase of consciousness, that purely immediate and passive experience of receiving impressions from the outside universe which is prior to both cognition (as the active effort to grasp) and conation (as the effective effort to change that which is responsible for our impressions). In a word feeling is that first immediate awareness of things which precedes the earliest form either of knowledge or of desire.<sup>7</sup>

The question which now arises is whether all feeling, as such, is religious or whether religion is a particular kind of feeling. This question poses difficulty for Mr. Schleiermacher

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<sup>7</sup> John Baillie; The Interpretation of Religion, Charles Scribners' Sons, 1928, P.205.



but he does attempt to face up to it. In general his answer is that religion is a feeling "of the infinite" - an awareness of being impressed by, and a sensibility to the Universe as a whole. To use one of his most familiar phrases, it is "a sense and taste for the infinite" (Sinn und Geschmack fürs Unendliche); and this becomes in his later magnum opus "a feeling of absolute dependence, which is the same as to say a feeling of dependence upon God". Such a feeling is a "pious feeling" and includes "all our impressions come to from the infinite universe, which is God".

In a later work, The Christian Faith, the feeling of "absolute dependence" is more narrowly defined as the "highest grade of feeling", which one has in experience as set against "lower grades of feeling", or feelings which we have outside our relationship with God.

In view of this theory what is to be done with doctrines and creeds of religious ideas and conviction? How do these relate to that infra-rational state of feeling which alone is religious? Again Schleiermacher makes answer and in an even more definite and concise fashion. The answer is simply that religious ideas - all doctrines, creeds and confessions - are the result of later reflection upon religious feeling. To religion itself "ideas and principles are all foreign". All that is immediately true in religion is that which has not yet passed through the stage of idea but has grown up purely in the feeling.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid. P.207.





As a feeling person however, one may become the object of his own consciousness. We may stand outside ourselves and contemplate our own feelings. The description which follows the contemplation of the nature of feelings is a principle and the description of each feeling an idea. Ideas and principles are not the substance of religion though, they are the essence of theology says Schleiermacher;

The manner in which Deity is presented to man in feeling is decisive of the worth of his religion, not the manner, always inadequate, in which it is copied in idea.<sup>9</sup>

To Schleiermacher falls the very real distinction of being the first to provide any fully reasoned alternative to rationalism. Certainly he was profoundly right in contending that the roots of religion lie deeper down in the soul than any speculative attempt to explain the world. His work has had a far reaching effect on Modern Theology, but it is questionable whether he was completely right in his insistence that religious experience arises in nothing but "pure and immediate feeling".

### 3. Psychoanalytic Theory

The psychoanalytic school has had comparatively recent birth, and is a field of thought with which moderns must contend. The man who brought the psychoanalytic method into being was the great Sigmund Freud. It is commonplace to say that Freud saw all human drives as ultimately deriving from

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<sup>9</sup> Baillie - The Interpretation of Religion - P.207



sex. This is an over-simplification that does not do justice to the complexities that Freud reported in his keen observation of human nature. In the first place, his definition of sex was much wider and far more inclusive than popular billboard conceptions of the term. In the second place, his later writings, such as Beyond the Pleasure Principle, speculate on the existence of other urges, such as the "death instinct", which seems to have little relation to the sex urge or libido.

Aristotle has commented on the inability of man to describe anything without saying that it is like something else. This is nowhere more true than in the case of the psychologist studying the human mind. John Locke compared it to a wax tablet on which experience made impressions; Thorndike thought of it as a kind of vast telephone exchange through which stimuli were connected with appropriate reactions; while Freud likened it to a closed hydraulic system in which an urge was no sooner repressed than it began to exert pressure in some other part of the system. He named the main parts of this system the Id, Ego, and Superego and contended that the religious attitude arose out of conflict or disharmony in these centers.

The Id - The sole function of the Id is to provide for the immediate discharge of quantities of excitation (energy or tension) that are released in the organism by internal or external stimuli. This function of the id fulfills the





primordial or initial principle of life which Freud called the "Pleasure Principle". The aim of the pleasure principle may be said to consist of avoiding pain and finding pleasure. The id does not think, it only wishes and acts. It seeks reduction of tension directly.

The Ego - Expending energy directly or in reflex fashion is not always tolerated by society and hence there must be a psychological system to effect proper transactions between the person and the world. This is done by the ego which is governed by the "reality principle", rather than operating on a pleasure principle as the id. In the well adjusted person the ego is the executive of the personality, controlling and governing the id and the superego, and maintaining commerce with the external world in the interests of total personality and its far-flung needs.<sup>10</sup>

The Superego - The third major institution of personality, the superego, is the moral or judicial branch of personality. It represents the ideal rather than the real; and it strives for perfection rather than reality or pleasure. It develops out of the ego as a consequence of the child's assimilation of his parents' standards regarding what is good and virtuous and what is bad and sinful. Thus the child replaces parental authority by his own inner authoritative source.

In the healthy personality these three systems form a unified and harmonious organization. By working together

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<sup>10</sup> Calvin S. Hall; A Primer of Freudian Psychology, A Mentor Book; New York, 1954. P.28.





they enable the individual to carry out efficient and satisfactory transactions with the environment, to the end of need fulfillment. If the systems of the personality are at odds the person is said to be maladjusted. In these terms religion springs from maladjustment centered in the Oedipus Complex. Oedipus was a prominent figure in Greek mythology who killed his father and married his mother. The development of the Oedipus Complex results when a boy at an early stage of psychic development (Phallic Stage) loves his mother and identifies himself with his father. When the sexual urge increases, the boy's love for his mother becomes more incestuous and as a result he becomes jealous of his rival father. If he persists in feeling sexually attracted to his mother, he runs the risk of being physically harmed by the father. In this predicament the ego must find a realistic solution satisfactory, both to the pleasure seeking id and the moral attitude of the superego, or face maladjustment. Maladjustment, or religion springs forth as the ego's way of coping with the sense of guilt felt by the individual in the Oedipus situation. In expiation for his act of rebellion toward the father (in wishing for his "departure or death"), the son attempts to reconcile with the father which involves trying to appropriate the father's good qualities and do his will. This leads to a search for the "father image". It is out of this search that the idea of God arises. Herein Freud finds the source of religion.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Sigmund Freud; Totem and Taboo, Modern Library Paperback, Random House, New York, 1946. P.164.



Freud's treatment of personality is very interesting indeed and is a real aid to thought concerning man's psychic life. I believe too, that he was completely correct in suggesting that man's total personality can be involved religiously. Where he made his error was in placing both the religious stimulus (conflict) and the religious response (search for the "father image") within the human psyche and his interpretation of these.

#### 4. Statement of a Thesis

In formulating a thesis I would agree with Sigmund Freud that total personality is involved in religious experience, rather than a specific aspect of the personality as Thomas Aquinas and Friedrich Schleiermacher proposed. I would agree with Thomas Aquinas and Schleiermacher against Freud however, and insist that the center of religious stimulus lies beyond man. With Rudolf Otto I would term this center, the Holy. To state it formally: Man responds to the Holy with his whole psyche: reason, emotion and will. These "faculties" of man's mind both receive stimuli from beyond and influence the style of expression through which religion comes to view.

Reason, of course, is the intellectual function of the mind. Reason is the tempering, ordering, judging, and directing function of the personality. It anticipates absurdities before they come and saves people from going to extremes. Furthermore, it supplies logical security to religious institutions





as well as to wholesome individual religion.

Regardless of what Thomas Aquinas might say, no one's religious life can be purely intellectual. Religion, like all of life also has vitality, warmth and passion. As Schleiermacher has contended, it has feeling or emotion. This does not imply what intellectuals might call religious slums, such as the evangelistic gospel tent and the rescue mission. Religious movements like Moral Re-Armament stir emotions and put life into ideals which have long lain dormant in merely intellectual forms.<sup>12</sup> An emotional orgy, even in the name of religion is not religion at all, but there must be an emotional stir in the experience of the Holy for it to be at all religious.

The last of the three faculties mentioned is the will. There has been much discussion on whether the will really exists, but we need not dwell on this remembering that the concept of the faculties or any breakdown of personality, is a mere figure of speech for our conceptual convenience. What the will represents is the executive function of the human spirit. A religious experience may be properly intellectualized and characterized by intense emotion, and yet the experience is never complete unless appropriate, and not contradictory decision and/or action is carried out.

For experience to be genuinely religious, reason, emotion and will must participate jointly and in a realistic fashion. We will search for material to support our position in The Holy

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<sup>12</sup> W.H. Clark; The Psychology of Religion, Charles Scribners' Sons, 1928. P.64.



Bible of the Christian Religion, in the theology of Rudolf Otto, and among other world religions.





## CHAPTER II

### THE OLD TESTAMENT VIEW OF HOLINESS AND ITS PLACE IN EXPERIENCE

To my mind, John Baillie, in a very fine work entitled "Our Knowledge of God", expresses the Old Testament comprehension of the holy very neatly as follows:

Now there is no doubt that in the consciousness of mankind as a whole, before it had been disturbed by the latter-day representations of philosophic atheism, this final demand that is made upon our wills is directly apprehended by us as a claim made upon us by a holy and personal Being to whom we give the name God.<sup>1</sup>

God (Yahweh) is the "Holy One of Israel" and to use a phrase of Paul Tillich's, it is he who gives a 'dimension of depth' or the 'third dimension' to religion. It is important to keep the idea of depth in mind when studying the Old Testament idea of the holy. If this is not done one may become occupied by the ethical emphasis in the Old Testament concept of the holy, to the exclusion of all else. Gustaf Aulen makes this point emphatically, and perhaps before considering the holiness characteristics attributed to God in the Old Testament, it might be well to consider his counsel.

We shall see shortly that the Hebrew root of holy denotes

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<sup>1</sup> John Baillie; Our Knowledge of God, New York, Charles Scribners' Sons, 1939. P.244.



fundamentally, that which is separate. The holy appears as the opposite of the profane, and as something wholly other than that which is this-worldly and relative. Aulen's idea which obviously stems from his Old Testament study, is that, "Holiness is the background and the atmosphere of the conception of God".<sup>2</sup> Holiness in these terms is the foundation on which the whole conception of God rests. Thus it gives a specific tone to each of the various elements in the idea of God and makes them part of a fuller conception. It might be said that the holy is the substance or essence of Old Testament religion. Because of its holiness-nature this religion cannot be contained purely and simply within ethical categories, nor can it be only a means by which man's happiness and needs are satisfied. Ethics and psychology fall within the human realm; holiness originates in the divine. Although the holy may be discussed in reference to persons, to places, and to things, at the same time it stands constantly as a sentinel marking the eternal distinction between the divine and the human.

The idea of holiness is well expressed in the hymn by Reginald Heber:

Holy, Holy, Holy! though the darkness hide Thee,  
Through the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see,  
Only Thou are holy: there is none beside Thee  
Perfect in power, in love, and purity.<sup>3</sup>

If this feature of holiness is kept in mind as we consider a breakdown of the concept, perspective will not be lost. With-

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<sup>2</sup> G. Aulen; The Faith of the Christian Church; The Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, 1948. P.121.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid - P.123.



out a third dimension, the more specific ideas of the holiness of Yahweh lose greatly in meaning and significance.

Yahweh is holy, and it is our thesis that man responds to the holy with his total personality - mind, will and emotion. In the pages that follow we shall correlate the features of holiness in the Nature of Yahweh to the elements of man's personality by discussing the holy under the heads: Mystery (which relates to emotion), Source of all Good (which relates to reason), and Supreme Lawgiver (which relates to will).

### 1. Etymology

The chief and proper Hebrew word for holiness is qodesh. This is the most intimately divine word of all. It has to do, as we shall see, with the very nature of deity; no word more so nor indeed any other as much.<sup>4</sup>

There is no question at all about the reference of qodesh to deity but there is a divergence as to its original meaning. Snaith points up two possibilities as to original meaning and then suggests that choice between the two must be based upon an a priori consideration of the development of religion in general. The two suggested first meanings are: "bright", "clear"; and "to be separated". The latter definition is the one more popularly followed in modern times. This explanation was first suggested by Von Baudissin and has been given support by Davidson, W. Robertson Smith and by Snaith himself. The reason for the choice of 'separation' in preference to

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<sup>4</sup> Norman H. Snaith; The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament, London, The Epworth Press, 1944. P.21.







'clear' is that it deals in original usage exclusively with the things that belong to the gods, as distinct from men. In its original usage, and in the Old Testament, the root stands for the difference between God and Man - and in positive terms. Its use is in the sense of "separated to" rather than "separated from". The reference is not primarily to the act of separation, but rather to the fact that the object has now come into the category of the separate. This has particular significance theologically since it means we must think of God first and man and things second. God, then stands apart as a Being in himself, holy and active. Man responds to a consciousness of the holy as follows:

## 2. Sense of Mystery

(a) Awe - "Who is able to stand before Jehovah, this holy God". (1 Sam 6:20). This verse from scripture points up the Old Testament sense of the unapproachableness of God. It indicates an aspect of his nature which awakened in men the feeling of awe.<sup>5</sup> Men believed in Old Testament times that they could not see God and live. There was something mysterious and incalculable about the operation of divine holiness; which was in a sense, feared. A great slaughter for example was visited upon the men of Beth Shemesh because they had in some apparently innocent way infringed upon the holiness of the ark (1 Sam 6:19). Another example of the negative effect of holiness and its mystery is seen in the story of and fate of

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<sup>5</sup> Albert C. Knudson; The Religious Teachings of the Old Testament, Abingdon Press, New York. Nashville. P.144.



Uzzah (2 Sam 6:6f). Uzzah put forth his hand to stay the ark as it was about to fall and he was struck dead! Yahweh was not completely understood.

(b) Electrically Charged - As the ark was conceived of as holy so was holiness applied to other places and to things. Even before the institution of land-property had arisen, certain places were regarded as sacred. These holy places were surrounded with restrictions which had no connection with their protection as property. Certain persons were denied entrance to the sanctuary, not because they were dangerous, but because they were unclean and offensive to the gods. It would seem that certain places and things were not holy because they were the property of the Gods, but because they were "electrically charged", with the divine nature or substance, so that it was dangerous for men to approach them except in certain specified ways.

Something of this force or contagion is seen in Leviticus. The Lord said to Moses with respect to "the law of the sin offering";

Whatever touches its flesh shall be holy; and when any of its blood is sprinkled on a garment, you shall wash that on which it was sprinkled in a holy place. And the earthen vessel in which it is boiled shall be broken; but if it is boiled in a bronze vessel, that shall be scoured, and rinsed in water. (Leviticus 6:27-28)

The sin offering was most holy and therefore most dangerous.

To some things and places a higher degree of holiness, a "most holy" state was attributed. This was because they stood





in an especially close relation to deity. An example among many is found in the book of Numbers: The Lord said to Moses and Aaron;

Let not the tribe of the family of the Kohathites be destroyed from among the Levites; but deal thus with them, that they may live and not die when they come near to the most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in and appoint them each to the task of his burden, but they shall not go in to look upon the holy things even for a moment, lest they die. (Numbers 6:18-20)

(c) Wrath - In psychological terms holiness took the form of wrath or jealousy. Whenever divine holiness was offended, whether by other nations or by Israel, or by profane persons or things the inevitable psychological reaction was wrath. In the Old Testament divine wrath was thought of as akin to human passion, which when left to itself might cut across the lines of equity! So the Psalmist says, "O Lord rebuke me not in thy anger, and chasten me not in thy wrath." (Psa.6:1) Jealousy was awakened in the divine whenever the covenant made between Yahweh and Israel was not honored. Israel might of her own choice worship other gods or be led astray by her enemies. In either case divine holiness was violated and divine jealousy aroused.

You shall not make yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in the heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me; but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments. (Exodus 20:4-6)





### 3. Source of All Good

(a) Majesty - It has been argued that holiness, even as applied to Deity, expresses the idea of relationship. Paul Tillich, in discussing the personal character of the Experience of the Holy, calls this an "I-Thou" relationship.<sup>6</sup> There is emotional content in personal relationships certainly, and one might therefore conclude that this discussion might better have been considered under the foregoing section. However, we are dealing now with a more advanced and distinctively Hebrew development which arises from recognition in the fuller sense, which involves understanding.

"The Holy One of Israel", for instance, is interpreted as meaning that God is holy by virtue of his relation to Israel. And when it was said that, "there is none holy as Jehovah", (1 Sam 2:2) the meaning is not that a particular form of holiness belonged to Yahweh, but that he alone was worthy to be regarded as truly divine. "Holiness" and "divinity" become almost synonymous terms.

The "I-Thou" relationship implies separation as well; but separation in a special sense. God was from the beginning transcendent in that He was different from man, but He was by no means transcendent in that He was remote from man. 'I am God, and not man: the Holy One in the midst of thee'. (Hosea 11:9) He is the high God, qodesh, and therefore essentially not man. But this does not prevent him from being

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<sup>6</sup> Paul Tillich; Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality, University of Chicago Press, 1952. P.23.



in the midst of his people. Transcendent does not mean remoteness. It means otherness.<sup>7</sup> God is a Being other than man - the source of all good; His Holiness is active in the life of the Community and in the lives of men.

Closely related to this concept of holiness is the idea of divine glory. The glory of Yahweh is an outward manifestation of his holiness. Says Isaiah, "Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." (Isaiah 6:3) Isaiah sees God's glory manifest in nature and history while Ezekiel and the writer of the P. (priestly) document represent the divine glory as a physical phenomena - a bright or fiery appearance.

Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherubim on which it rested to the threshold of the house; and he called to the man clothed in linen, who had the writing case at his side. (Ezekiel 9:3)

The glory of the Lord settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days; and on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. (Exodus 24:15)

Frequently expressed in the work of Ezekiel is that Yahweh's motive in redeeming Israel was to sanctify his name: "I had regard for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations whither they went." (Ezek.36:21) The prophet implies here that Yahweh's honor was at stake and must be protected. Although we sense here a feeling of resentment and offended dignity, there is much more. Back of this there is the profound ethical principle of respect for

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<sup>7</sup> Snaith; Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament. P.47.





oneself. Self-respect lies at the very basis of moral life and no-one losing his self-respect can help but lose respect of others and respect for others. God must be true to his own nature. His holiness, His transcendence, his ever-present Majesty requires it. (Doctrine of Shekinah in Judaism)

(b) Purity - When Yahweh said, "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (Lev.11:44) he meant that the people should hold themselves apart from everything unclean as he himself did. In some places holiness and cleanness become almost synonymous terms in the Old Testament. Originally objects and customs were rendered impure because of their association with heathen deities. Later uncleanness was attributed to a wider range of objects and acts. All sin came to be regarded as unclean. (Lev.18:26-28) Priests were prohibited from wearing anything woollen for fear that sweat would be stimulated. (Ezek.44:18) Holiness in this sense formed the ruling principle in the rites and ceremonies of the Old Testament.<sup>8</sup>

(c) Righteousness - In the development of the Old Testament holiness became more and more an ethical and spiritual conception. As the worship of Yahweh became more and more firmly established in Israel, the idea of holiness naturally took its content from the prevailing concept of character. God came to be thought of as a distinctly Moral Being and so holiness comes to have a uniquely ethical content. Isaiah was the first to make a strongly Ethical emphasis. It is

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<sup>8</sup> Knudson; The Religious Teachings of the Old Testament.  
P. 150.





Isaiah's general teaching that Israel's sin is rebellion against God and that divine holiness has made itself known and will continue to manifest itself in righteous judgement on his people. This attribute of deity came to be regarded as an expression of divine holiness, or as virtually identical with it.

#### 4. Supreme Law-Giver

##### (a) Omnipotence.

To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? Says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their hosts by number, calling them all by name; by the greatness of his might, and because he is strong in power not one is missing. (Isaiah 40:25)

God reigneth over the nations: God sitteth upon his holy throne. (Isaiah 47:8)

Deutero-Isaiah makes plain Yahweh's claim to dominion and power and this power is known by what he does in the world. Yet, sheer power, even absolute power for the endless ages, does not itself guarantee the rightfulness of law. However, the law of Yahweh is not only power; it is truth both for men and nations.

It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it, and many people shall come and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation neither shall they learn war any more. (Isaiah 2:2-4)



The law of God is worthy of complete obedience because it is the true norm by which all laws ought to be judged. God's rule is not, to use Kant's term, heteronomous. It is the law of our Being. Hence God is the one law-giver worthy of absolute obedience. Many legislators are relatively good. Many are endowed with relative power and relative moral authority. God alone possesses absolute power and absolute moral authority. God only is holy.<sup>9</sup>

### 5. The Religious Experience of Moses and Isaiah

In our consideration of the Old Testament View of Holiness thus far we have covered a good deal of ground, and seen that ideas in biblical usage may be related to emotion, mind and will. We will turn now from concepts to the realm of the actual experience of Moses and Isaiah when in the presence of the Holy. If our thesis be valid, elements indicating a total personality response should be apparent. Let us first set down before us the scriptural account of the religious experience which Moses had on Mount Sinai/Horeb and that of Isaiah's in the Temple.

I Exodus 3:1-6.

Now Moses was keeping the flocks of his father-in-law, Jethro, the Priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the Mountain of God. And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and lo, the bush was burning and yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, "I will turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt." When the Lord saw that he turned aside

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<sup>9</sup> L. Harold DeWolf; A Theology of the Living Church, Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York, 1953. P.112f.





to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" and he said, "Here am I." Then he said, "Do not come near, put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." And he said "I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

## II Isaiah 6:1-5

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim, each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to the other and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. And he said: "Woe is me. For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!"

### Emotional Elements of the Passages

#### I Exodus 3:1-6

(a) "And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire." The incident of the burning bush in Midian has been interpreted in many and various ways. Some scholars insist that what Moses saw was a phenomenon of nature which might have assumed this strange and startling appearance. Nature does at times clothe herself in flaming colors - in Autumn, ahead of the rising sun and as the sun goes down. Turning from the natural, one may choose to interpret the experience psychologically. Perhaps it was in Moses' anger, in the burning indignation that does not consume, that the best





explanation rests. Yet again it could have been a combination of these and other factors. Whatever the position in this matter I believe all would agree that in this experience Moses was emotionally disturbed - perhaps a burning sense of anger, perhaps a sense of the aesthetic, perhaps a sense of awe before God's Glory, perhaps all three; but certainly an emotional response.

(b) "Put off your shoes from off your feet." Moses was in the presence of the divine and he knew it. His own finite creaturehood before The Creator was made plain. His human weakness and sin became evident in the Presence, in the pure light of God's Glory. Likely Moses felt quite small and completely unworthy in God's presence and out of respect to that which caused him to know this feeling, he removed his shoes.

(c) "And Moses hid his face." Moses was afraid to look upon God. The Hebrew people believed that no one could look upon God and live. God's holiness was more than the human eye could stand and as well, one could not always be sure what action the holy would take.

## II Isaiah 6:1-5

(a) "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up." Here again we see the mysterious sense of the otherness of God suggested. In this passage Isaiah is called to the office of Prophet. God reveals himself to the inner spirit and man tells of it in words of the body. It is just as real



as though the human eye had seen it. This was true of Moses as we have seen and as we shall see it was true for the apostle Paul.<sup>10</sup>

(b) "With two he covered his face - - and the foundation shook at the voice of him who called." God's power is so great that even the voice of one of his attendants shakes the foundations of the temple and the prophet trembles before Him. So worthy of reverence is He that even these great superhuman Seraphim cover their faces in His presence.

The attributing of holiness to God is a response to an experience of His presence rather than an inference from thought concerning him. Like the beauty of a symphony or the crushing sorrow of bereavement, yet more, holiness is a quality which must be felt to be understood and yet when felt is known to be beyond description or even adequate comprehension. The holy is the ultimate of all value qualities; it is known immediately as absolute and inexplicable in other terms.<sup>11</sup>

### Intellectual Aspects of the Passages

#### I Exodus 3:1-6

(a) "I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt." If one takes this at face value it has very little significance. If the passage is read as an expression of something which is happening deeper in the psyche then it becomes very meaningful. No one enters any experience with

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<sup>10</sup> The Abingdon Bible Commentary - Abingdon-Cokesbury Press; New York, Nashville, P. 634.

<sup>11</sup> R. F. Davidson; Rudolf Otto's Interpretation of Religion, Princeton University Press, 1947.



his mind a blank, unless it be birth! At the time of second birth (spiritual) one has many unanswered questions.

Certainly in this situation he had much on his mind. By searching he gained new insight and came to recognize God's will for both himself and his people.

(b) "I am the God of your fathers - - -." In a moment of insight Moses saw that this God before whom he stood had given birth to his people. He realizes now that this God has been in the arena of history through the ages and that He would continue to act.

## II Isaiah 6:1-5

(a) "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts." Thought has been given to this particular statement earlier in this chapter so there is no need to dwell on it at length. Suffice to say that the prophet recognizes God's purity to be so transcendent that he is overwhelmed with the sense of iniquity in himself and in his people. Isaiah has come to a moral understanding which those before him did not have.

### Aspects Involving Will

Both Moses and Isaiah respond to God's call with renewed personal integrity and complete devotion. Isaiah deems God's rightful authority so absolute that he eagerly volunteers to serve Him without asking what he will be required to do. He became a profound and fearless spokesman for his God.

Moses is not quite so willing at the outset and as most of us, offers a number of excuses as to why he is not able







to serve. He isn't sure that he has "what it takes" and is ready to let someone else do the work. He doesn't know whether his faith is strong enough to stand in times of testing. And he does not think that he will be able to express his new found understanding with enough eloquence and conviction to convince others. Despite his doubts to begin with however, following a religious experience which involved him totally, he moved out to give his all for God.

The gradual process of the "rationalizing, ethicising, and humanising" of the original and purely numinous (sense of mystery) idea of holiness may be traced throughout the whole course of Old Testament history, until it finally completes itself in Jesus' thought of God as a righteous and loving Father.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> John Baillie; The Interpretation of Religion, New York, Charles Scribners' Sons, 1928. P.246.



## CHAPTER III

### RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

#### AND

### A DEFINITION OF THE HOLY

The thesis of this paper is that man's total personality responds to the awareness of God's presence. Man's emotions, his intellect and his will are stimulated when confronted by the Holy.

A glance at any concordance of the New Testament indicates immediately that the term holy is not a New Testament word in the sense of popular use. It is too important a concept in the Old Testament however, to have lost meaning completely. The Old Testament concept of the holy is embodied in the nature of Yahweh; the New Testament idea should therefore be available to us in its deeper understanding of God. We will look for our definition in the work of the apostle Paul and then study the religious experience of Mary Magdalene and the other Mary at the tomb of Jesus, that of the disciples at Galilee following the resurrection, and the Apostle Paul's on the Road to Damascus.

#### 1. The New Testament Idea of The Holy

Paul was a Jew and educated at the feet of the great



Jewish Rabbi Gamaliel. We can be certain therefore, that he was well versed in the Hebrew faith and tradition. He knew the law and as a Jew, he would have an intense awareness of the holiness of God. In fact, the sense of God's holiness, as it is conceived of in the Old Testament tortured him with a sense of his own unworthiness and of the barrier which his sins had erected between himself and God.

One might expect Paul therefore to use the term holy extensively and to define it in some detail. When turning to his letters however, one discovers that he very rarely employs the word holy: once in his letter to the Romans, once in First Corinthians, once in Ephesians, and once in Hebrews; the latter two references being open to question on the basis of authorship. This need not discourage us in our quest though, for we may study its use in Romans, which is held to be Paul's most mature work, and further it may be that his concept is contained in a form other than the term holy. C. H. Dodd in his Commentary on the book of Romans suggests that the primary emphasis in Paul's idea of the holy is not ethical as in the Old Testament, but rather, it can be understood only by reference to the person of Jesus Christ.

Let us press forward to study Paul's concept of the holy and to discover emotional, moral, and volitional elements should these be present.

The very fine and famous passage from Romans 12:1 will be our point of departure.





I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

The Abingdon Commentary points out that the "therefore" of this passage forges the link between the doctrinal and ethical teaching of the letter. In the chapters immediately preceeding Paul has dealt with the greatness and the wonder of the mercies of God. Paul is almost speechless because God is so gracious, but he does find words now to expound the ethical implications of a God-given salvation. So a man's salvation is not complete until he is pure, perfect and worthy of God. These comments point strongly to the ethical aspect of the holy but fail to capture the depth and breadth of the meaning of the holy as conceived in the mind of Paul.

The words of C. H. Dodd with reference to this passage indicate a much broader definition and point specifically to a sense of awe, to value judgement and to an act of will.

- (1) Emotional Response- "The Contemplation of God's mercy has moved Paul, and his readers, to a sense of awe before the fathomless wealth of the Divine Being. This sense is based on an instinctive awe before a mystery beyond our knowing and yet potent to kindling our deepest emotions. In all Theistic Religions this awe is felt for God, and persons are holy which belong to him and share his nature."
- (2) Intellectual Response- "The Ethical Value of this idea of holiness depends on the moral quality attributed to the Divine Being. Already by his Jewish training Paul was compelled to think of God's holiness in ethical terms, and when he contemplated His mercy as revealed in Christ his sense of God's holiness was immeasurably deepened."



- (3) Response of Will- "The ritual of sacrifice was in Judaism as in all ancient religions, the central act of worship by which the holiness of God was acknowledged, and in some sense conveyed to the worshippers. For Christians Paul says, the real worship of God is in their self-dedication to<sup>1</sup> him for ethical ends."

It may well be that Paul's concept of religion is centered in his redefinition of the holy. As for 'the Saints' of the Old Testament, Paul's idea of the holy is centered in the nature of God. At the very forefront of Paul's thought was the fact that Jesus Christ brought to men a knowledge of God which without Him they could never have possessed or entered into. Jesus himself said:

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9) and that was an essential and primary part of the belief of Paul.<sup>2</sup> Jesus then, is the revelation of the holiness of God, in him we see God's holiness active in a way never before experienced.

In commenting on I Corinthians 3:16 (God's Temple is holy, and that temple you are) James Moffat says:

As love and holiness are one in the nature of God himself, so they must be in the nature of those who belong to him as saints.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> C.H. Dodd; The Moffat New Testament Commentary, The Epistle of Paul to the Romans; London: Hodder and Staughton Ltd.; 1932. P.190, 191.

<sup>2</sup> William Barclay; The Mind of St. Paul, Collins: St. James's Palace, London, 1958. P.71.

<sup>3</sup> James Moffat; The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, London: Hodder and Staughton Ltd.; 1938. P.42.



For the moment I am particularly interested in the first part of Dr. Moffat's statement - holiness and love are one in the nature of God. Certainly we would all be agreed, and perhaps Paul before any, that Jesus by his work has introduced us to the love of God. In fact while 'the law' was a stumbling block for Paul, it was the love of God 'in Christ' which set him free. Therefore, for further insight into Paul's idea of the holy let us turn now to his description of the work of Jesus Christ.

In the course of his writings Paul uses five great metaphors to show how God's love or holiness is active in Christ. He takes five great pictures from ordinary life, which would have been very vivid to the people of his day, to show what God in Christ has done for man. In all of these there is the emotional element of awe and wonder at the graciousness of God and also the overwhelming ethical implications of His goodness which must elicit in man a decision for devotion and service.

The first of these is the metaphor from the law court: In this concept Paul is illustrating the terms righteous, just; righteousness, justice; justify; words which all stem from a single greek root. What we are saying here is that part of Paul's idea of the holy is embodied in this term. By this concept,

Sinful men before the divine tribunal are acquitted, for nothing, by God's decree as Judge.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> C. H. Dodd; The Epistle to the Romans. P.51







Speaking in purely ethical terms, there must be judgement. There must be a difference between what happens to man who fulfills the ethical demands of his religion and the man who has not. If a crime is committed, sentence must be pronounced. This meaning is not the case in the work of Paul. God, says Paul, justifies the ungodly (Romans 4:5). For any judge to treat a bad man as if he were a good man was to the Jew the acme of injustice and wickedness. The Old Testament has it: "He that justifieth the wicked is an abomination to the Lord" (Proverbs 17:15). But in Paul, and herein lies the mystery, the term justify means acquittal by God's grace.

The perfect picture of this concept lies in the parable of the Prodigal Son. The son has planned to come back with his confession of sin against heaven and his father, and with his request to be made a hired servant. He is never allowed to make this request however, for his father welcomes him back, not to the status of servant, but to the status of son, as if he had never been away.

When the American Civil War was in progress, and when the south had rebelled against the north on the question of slavery, someone once asked Lincoln:

"When this war is over, and the south is subdued and conquered, and has come back into the Union, how are you going to treat those rebellious southerners?"

Back came Lincoln's answer:

"I am going to treat them as though they had never been away."



This is precisely what Paul means by justification; he means that in astonishing love, God treats men as if they had never been away.<sup>5</sup> This is so contrary to what Paul had been taught that he stands in awe and wonder before it.

Of course there is more to it than that; the process does not stop there; justification has to be followed by sanctification. The sinner who has been so freely received back must go on to clothe himself with lost holiness; he must understand God's word and do it!

Here then is the metaphor from the law court: it shows man standing before God with the right to expect nothing but utter condemnation, and suddenly discovering through the message of Jesus Christ that God is not threatening him with austere justice but offering him amazing love. In view of this man can do none other than be holy as God has made his holiness known in Christ.

The second great metaphor which Paul uses to describe the Nature and Work of God in Christ is the metaphor from friendship. This picture is contained in the word reconciliation. Paul speaks of us being enemies to God, and being reconciled by the death of his son (Romans 5:10). Paul does not use the verb to reconcile often (Katallasein) but when he does it seems central to his gospel. The key idea is the restoration of a lost relationship. Though we may be estranged from God by disobedience or sin or fear, Jesus Christ brings

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<sup>5</sup> W. Barclay; The Mind of Paul, P.77.



man and God together again. 'In Christ', the new relationship is one of trusting love. This is amazing to be sure, but it is the experience of those who know Jesus.

The metaphor from Slavery is another that Paul uses to describe God's nature and work in Christ. In this picture he defines the term "ransom". Paul uses Apolytrosis to mean the act of redeeming or deliverance. Behind this term is the particular color given it by the Old Testament. To the Jews their liberation from slavery in Egypt was the supreme event in their history, and the supreme intervention of God. "I will redeem you" said God, "with a stretched out arm". (Exodus 6:6) The Jewish people still look back in awe and wonder upon this great act of Yahweh and it remains a compelling center to devotion. Through this picture there throbs the joy of the slave set free.

It must be said further that this picture also had a Greek background and here the aspect of activity or acting is even more clearly pointed up. It was possible for the Greek slave, by considerable effort to purchase his own freedom. By the law of slavery he could keep some of his savings after paying a percentage to his master, and when he accumulated enough, purchase his freedom. This took place in the temple where the priest paid the money over to the master. By this act the slave became the property of God, and therefore was free from all men. Paul would not hold for a minute that we could pay our own purchase price but this was likely







the picture he had in mind in writing to the Corinthians, "Ye are bought with a price". (1 Corinthians 6:20) In his love and concern for men in bondage to evil, God in Christ makes possible their emancipation.

Fourthly, we have the term propitiation. The Greek word (hilasterion) which is derived from a verb which in the biblical sense means, 'to perform an act whereby guilt or defilement is removed'.<sup>6</sup> The idea underlying this is characteristic of primitive religion. The ancients felt that if a taboo was infringed, the person or thing involved became unclean, defiled or profane. This condition of defilement could be removed by an appropriate act such as washing with water, sprinkling of blood, etc. Such acts were felt to have the value, in some sense, of a disinfectant. In the Old Testament the whole range of ritual and sacrifice comes to be a means by which sin is forgiven. The basic idea is the turning of wrath into graciousness.

Paul says that Christ is our hilasterion. If the word is taken as a noun, there are two suggestions. (a) It is suggested that hilasterion means a sacrifice to expiate sin. This would mean that Jesus is the sacrifice who expiates the sin of man. However, nowhere in all Greek literature does hilasterion mean a sacrifice, and certainly Paul does not mean to imply the placating of an angry God by its use. (b) Hilasterion can mean also the place where hilasmos,

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<sup>6</sup> C.H. Dodd; The Epistle to the Romans. P.54.



expiation, is done and made. Because of that, both in the Old Testament and the New Testament hilasterion has a regular and a technical meaning. It always means the lid of gold above the ark which was known as the mercy-seat. The mercy-seat was the golden lid of the ark which rested in the Holy of Holies. Only the high Priest could enter the Holy of Holies, and there representing the people commune with God. It was God's promise: "I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat." (Exodus 25:22)

If then we take hilasterion to mean the mercy-seat, and if we call Jesus our hilasterion in that sense, it will mean, so to speak, that Jesus is the place where man and God meet, and especially He is the place where man's sin meets with the atoning love (holiness) of God.<sup>7</sup>

The experience of the saints bears this out to be true, but again a mystery, God's love demands and insists that he forgive. His justice demands and insists that man's sin must be punished. On the Cross, In Jesus Christ, God's love and God's justice meet, in the one possible act which could satisfy both that justice and that love. "God's love pays the penalty and bears the punishment which God's justice demands."<sup>8</sup>

The picture of adoption further expresses what God in Christ does for men. In Romans 8:15 Paul says that the Christian has received the spirit of adoption which enables

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<sup>7</sup> W. Barclay; The Mind of Paul. P.88.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. P.89.



us to call God Father, and to approach God as such. In the light of the Roman practice of adoption this has vivid meaning.

There was no more dramatic or far-reaching legal ceremony in any law than Roman adoption. Under Roman law a father had absolute power over his child - he could sell the child, enslave the child, and had even the power of life and death over his child. A son could not himself possess anything or inherit anything. As long as the father was alive the son never came of age. He might be a man of senior years and reach a high and noble office in the state, but so long as his father was alive, he remained entirely in his father's power. Therefore, under Roman law adoption was not an easy affair. It was regarded as a most decisive step which when undertaken was settled once and for all.

The adopted son under Roman law, lost all rights in his old family and completely gained all rights in his new family. In the most literal sense he gained a new father, he became fully an heir to his new father's estate, all debts and obligations of his former life were cancelled, and he became a new person, entering upon a new life. If the adopted person had children of his own, these children also became the children of the adopting father, so family was affected by the adoption just as much as the father and the son.

Paul would be thinking of all this when he spoke of the adoption of Christians into the family of God. The Christian received a new father - even God. All his past life was







cancelled and there was given him a new beginning. He became a full inheritor of the grace and the wealth of the riches of God and a kinsman of all the saints of God.

Here we have the emotional content of a family tie, the recognition of responsibility, and the decision to become a son. This is from man's point of view, but theologically and even more important, we find also in the picture God's desire to be Father and in love seeking men out in Christ.

By the very word adoption, God becomes father and we become child; and the very essence of religion becomes not a struggle to keep an impossible law, but the joy of entry, all undeserved, into the family and household of God.<sup>9</sup>

In our discussion of the metaphors which Paul uses to describe his understanding of God in Christ we discover a completely new definition of the holy. The primary qualities attributed to the Divine Being are grace and love. Only in the light of God's love can we understand God's justice. By the grace of God we stand before Him as though we had always recognized Him as Lord of our lives. In Christ, the bearer of God's grace and love, we come to be at one with God's holiness and experience the new life of an adopted son.

## 2. Response of Personality to the Holy

Since we have found the person and work of Jesus central to our definition of the holy we shall now study three occasions involving religious experience in the presence of the risen Lord. We shall be looking for elements which we

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid. P.96.



believe present in all experience of a truly religious nature:  
The Holy as the stimulus and the response of emotion,  
intellect and will.

Firstly, the experience of Mary Magdalene and the  
disciples as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew:

#### I Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (Matt. 28:9-10)

And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Hail!"  
And they came up and took hold of his feet and  
worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do  
not be afraid; go and tell my brethren to go  
to Galilee, and they will see me".

#### II The Disciples at Galilee (Matt. 28:17-21)

And when they saw him they worshipped him, but  
some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them,  
"All power is given to me in heaven and in  
earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations,  
baptizing them in the name of the Father, and  
the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to  
observe all that I have commanded you, and lo,  
I am with you always, to the close of the age."

### Emotional Elements of the Passages

#### I Matt. 28:9-10

1. "Hail!" - The exact rendering of this word is "Be glad!"  
or "Rejoice". John 20:19 says, "Peace to you". These  
were common greetings in Christ's day, but on the lips of  
Jesus have particular and eternal significance in terms  
of hope, joy and gladness.
2. "Do not be afraid". - Often Jesus had said this in his  
earthly journey and at his word the angry waves of anxiety  
and fear had been stilled. In this case these words quiet  
the fear of death in all who believe in his resurrection.



J. S. Whale has a story of a musician who on hearing "some perfect convincing phrase" in one of Beethoven's symphonies, would say, "of course, if that is so, there is no occasion to worry". Christians have that confidence in the presence of their living Lord.

3. "They worshipped him". Certainly there are emotional overtones here. In Jesus they had found forgiveness, love, courage, and brotherhood.

## II Matt. 28:17-21

4. "Baptizing in". George Buttrick suggests the meaning here is to be baptized into the possession and protection of the Godhead and the establishment of a vital union between God and the believer. At-onement with God has a depth of emotional significance.

## Intellectual Aspects of the Passage

### I Matt. 28:9-10

1. "Jesus met them". This phrase involves the fact of recognition. In the passage immediately preceeding this one, it is stated that an Angel of the Lord appeared - now they meet Jesus and worship him! There is of course, an intellectual side to this worship, which involves not only an acceptance of the person, but also that for which he stands: his gospel message and ethical teachings.

### II Matt. 28:17-21

2. "Some doubted". There can be little doubt but what this applied to some of Jesus' followers; and not just to by-





standers. Doubt is not a bad thing however, for questioning often leads to better understanding.

3. "All Power". (Authority) Intellectual assent to this requires that men obey the command of Jesus as an officer would the command of a general.

Not seldom his commands run counter to what seems to us to be practical wisdom. He has right to command. The command is spoken in the gentleness of love and the rigor of holiness. He shares with us all hazards of obedience. The issue of his dictates is joy - But authority is his, in heaven and earth.<sup>10</sup>

This man has given recognition to the divine authority of Jesus and so do his disciples.

4. "Teaching". Christian Education comes within the scope of intellect and ethics. The term as used here would reflect the fine ethical strains of the gospel: "The kingdom life is no mere emotion, but understanding is righteousness", says George Buttrick. To be a Christian teacher means we first accept the person and teaching of Jesus, and then present these to the mind and heart of others.

#### Aspects Involving Will

I Matt. 28:9-10

1. "Go and tell my brethren". And the eleventh verse begins, "Now when they were going". It is difficult to say whether Jesus is here referring to his immediate family, to his disciples, or to a yet wider circle. It is clear

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<sup>10</sup> The Interpreter's Bible, Volume 7, New York, Abingdon - Corkesbury Press, Nashville, P.622.

The first of these is the fact that the  
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however, that Mary Magdalene and the other Mary are required to act. They become the bearers of the "good news" of the new insight which has come to them.

II Matt. 28:17-21.

2. "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations". In order to act on this command required great conviction. Those who have experienced Christ in their lives ought always to obey in order that others might be brought into the possession and power of God the Creator, Christ the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit who is our guide and advocate.

It is somewhat artificial perhaps to say that mind, will and emotion per se are aroused in religious experience, for these aspects of personality do not operate in a completely detached fashion. All three function together as do members of the body and when in harmony experience is vital and meaningful. That which gives harmony to the religious life is knowledge of Christ's promise, "lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

Let us look briefly now at Paul's religious experience on the road to Damascus to determine if on this occasion his total personality was encountered by the holy. There are a number of accounts of this experience: Gal.1:13-17 and Acts 9:1-19a, 22:3-16 and 26:4-18. These descriptions by Paul himself in Galatians and by Luke in Acts do not agree in every detail and scholars in an interpretation of the experience have made much of the differences. All accounts are agreed

The first of these is the fact that the  
 system is not a simple one. It is a  
 complex one, and it is not possible to  
 describe it in a few words.

The second of these is the fact that the  
 system is not a simple one. It is a  
 complex one, and it is not possible to  
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The seventh of these is the fact that the  
 system is not a simple one. It is a  
 complex one, and it is not possible to  
 describe it in a few words.

on this however, that on the road to Damascus Paul met his living Lord. In Galatians he says, God, "through his grace was pleased to reveal his son to me, in order that I might preach among the gentiles". (Gal.1:16). In the accounts from the work of Luke there is a flash of light from heaven and he hears a voice say in reply to his inquiry, "I am Jesus (of Nazareth) whom you are persecuting".

O. H. Baker has this to say;

The resurrection of Jesus and the conversion of Paul are two mutually related facts in the religious transformation of the Apostle. - - What happened inwardly to the disciples by the post-calvary event also happened to Paul.--- It represents the end of the former life and the beginning of the new - an actual participation in the death and resurrection of Jesus by which he becomes the Christ of God, and Saul, the Pharisee, became Paul the Apostle of the Christ.<sup>11</sup>

Paul comes into the presence of the resurrected, living Christ and identifies with Him completely. This emotional involvement is so complete that he claims to be crucified with Christ and that it is no longer he that lives but Christ that lives in him.

His experience had also a profound effect on his intellectual understanding of religion. It is the conversion experience which shatters a very rigidly set Judaic mold, prepares the way for reorganizing and refocusing the older elements of his religion, and enables him to respond creatively to new demands in a contemporary situation. His whole ethical

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<sup>11</sup> O.H. Baker, Ph.D.; Human Nature Under God, Association Press - New York, 1958. P.148.







concept changes and he moves out to apply in practice what he knows to be true in theory. Not only had he been sent on a mission of destroying the Christians, convinced of his duty to carry out the mission with deadly intent, but as a Jew he would personally feel hostile toward all Gentiles. Now however, he accepts Christians and the teachings of Jesus and considers it his calling to "preach among the Gentiles". Now he can know nothing that lies outside his experience of Christ crucified, though the preaching of that may be foolishness to those who hear without the support of this vivid conviction which is his unique conviction. (1 Corinthians 2:2).

Saul of Tarsus becomes Paul the Apostle; a new personality. In loyalty to his religious inheritance his zeal was unsurpassed, yet he became not only an ardent believer in the faith he sought to destroy, but also its most vigorous and undaunted apostle with an intellectual gift for reconstructing it that made him a power to conjure with through succeeding centuries.

### 3. Jesus' Own Ideas

For the Christian, the final test of validity in any moral or religious question, is that of the mind of Christ. Let us then direct our quest for understanding concerning the 'Holy', into the area of the teaching and person of Jesus Christ. We will examine the content of His teaching, firstly concerning God, then concerning Himself, and finally



we will look briefly at the person of Jesus as seen through the eyes of the people of his day.

### Jesus' Teaching About God

The "Fatherhood" of God lies at the very heart of Christ's teaching in this regard. Certainly there is an element of the sacred or holy involved in the relationship of a father or a mother, to their children. In this relationship, probably as nowhere else, motives are pure, and wholesome and of good report. In a mature home situation the parent's love of his child is creative and upbuilding. Also, the children learn similarly to love and honor their parents. Jesus spoke of God as Father and demonstrated such a confident trust in Him that men have seldom doubted the reality of Christ's claim.

As T. W. Manson points out in The Teachings of Jesus, the name Father is not widely found on the lips of Jesus in the Mark and Q documents (the two primary sources from which the gospels were written). The reverse is true in the case of Matthew and John. There are two possible explanations for this: either the constant emphasis on the divine Fatherhood in Matthew and John is an intrusion, an addition of extraneous matter to the genuine teachings of Jesus, or it is an attempt to bring out clearly what appeared to be the essence of the gospel. The fact that the Fatherhood of God is attested as an essential element of the gospel leads Manson to adopt the latter alternative.<sup>12</sup> The Fatherhood of God is not unique to

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<sup>12</sup> T.W. Manson; The Teachings of Jesus, Cambridge at University Press, 1951. P.100.



the teachings of Jesus; it is fairly widely taught in the Old Testament (Psalms, Deuteronomy, Isaiah). This raises the question of why Jesus was so reticent in his use of Father (Mark and Q) - why his reserve about the theologically commonplace? The answer largely proposed is that the Fatherhood of God was not a theological commonplace to Jesus, but rather, it was a sacred relationship - a genuine religious experience which Christ held very dear. Man does not chatter freely about those things which mean the most to him.

It is very likely that the Fatherhood of God was at the core of the religious experience of Jesus and became a supreme reality in his life, as it has in the lives of many. At the time of Jesus' Baptism, as he comes up out of the Jordan, he sees the heavens open and the spirit like a dove, descending upon him. Notice that the source or stimulus of this experience is outside, above and beyond Jesus, and that there is a holiness about it that is symbolized in the dove. The sacred is further accentuated in the Fatherhood element: and he heard a voice from heaven - 'Thou art my beloved son, in thee am I well pleased'.<sup>13</sup> The Marcan account makes it clear that it was Jesus himself, and he alone who saw the vision and heard the voice. If this is so, it follows that the account derives ultimately from the Master himself.

Once again in the Garden of Gethsemane, the Father appears as the supreme reality in the life of Jesus. The will

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<sup>13</sup> Mark 1:10f







of the Father dominates the life of the Son. In the prayer, 'Not my will, but Thine be done', we see His absolute trust in God the Father. Complete obedience to His will is far more important to Jesus than the extremity of physical suffering and the unmerited contempt and hatred which He would be required to endure. For Jesus 'God the Father' was a present and living reality. It may be for us in proportion as we ourselves receive the spirit of adoption whereby we cry 'Abba, Father' and pray in spirit and in truth, 'Our Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed by Thy name'. (Matt. 6:9)

Much more could be said concerning Christ's teachings about God, but we cannot attempt to go into these in detail. He thought of God as King: the Eternal Sovereign of Creation, the Moral Order, and men's lives. God is the Holy One of Heaven and Earth through all eternity. We must love the Lord our God with our whole being - and he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind."<sup>14</sup>

#### Jesus' Teaching About Himself

But (and this is a startling original contribution of Jesus) with sovereignty Jesus combined the idea of service and sacrifice; 'The son of man must suffer many things', He said not once but many times. 'The Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many'. (Mark 10:45) <sup>15</sup>

There is clearly a dual aspect to the role which Jesus conceives of himself as playing. On the one hand he identifies

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<sup>14</sup> Matthew 22:37

<sup>15</sup> A.M. Hunter; The Words & Works of Jesus, SCM Press Ltd., 56 Bloomsbury Street, London. P.87.



himself with God, and on the other the identification is with man. Such is of real significance from our point of view, for this duality involves Jesus totally. There is the emotional experience of the holy in his relationship to God, there is the knowledge of sonship, and the volitional element is more than evident in his service to God and man. These aspects may be expanded with reference to the titles Jesus attributes to himself: 'Son of God', 'Son of Man', 'Servant of the Lord'.

### The Son of God

Dr. A. M. Hunter believes that this title contains the Old Testament concept of Messiah (a divinely appointed Head of the People of God and the Bearer of His Rule to men)<sup>16</sup> plus Christ's unique idea. Three passages from primary sources shed light on the plus quality in our Lord's self-consciousness - his filial consciousness.

The first is the parable of the wicked husbandman (Mark 12:1-9). Here Jesus tells the story of a businessman who bought a vineyard and then let it out to a tenant. At the end of the crop year he sent one of his servants to collect the rent, but he was beaten and robbed by the husbandmen. Again the owner sent another and still another servant to receive his share of the harvest, but all were treated likewise. Finally he sent his only beloved son, feeling sure

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid. P.82. This definition of Messiah is the common denominator of various O.T. concepts: King reigning in righteousness (Isaiah 9:2-7), Superhuman personage (Similitudes of Enoch), others expected a second and greater David (Psalm 189), others a warrior Messiah and others a supernatural Savior of the world.



that they would respect one of his own. The husbandmen killed him however, knowing he was the heir, and thinking that they would thus receive the inheritance. One may interpret the servants of this parable as being the messengers which God had sent to Israel - all were slaves. Jesus however, is not a slave, but the 'one beloved son' of the Father and 'the heir' of all that is of his Father.

So again the father-son relationship is given emphasis in all its richness and sacredness of meaning. Jesus discovers himself as the Son of God in that he is of the Father in the essence holiness. The religious experience which is his reveals that he and the Father are One. His conviction of sonship is seen even more conclusively in what Hunter terms the most important christological verse in the New Testament;

All things have been delivered unto me of my father,  
And no one knoweth the Son, save the Father;  
Neither doth any know the Father save the Son,  
And he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him.<sup>17</sup>

This 'unshared sonship' or filial relationship in Jesus' own consciousness, and which has been recognized by the Church in all time, arouses awe and wonder in the life of all who recognize its truth.

### The Son of Man

While Jesus did not use the title 'Son of God' a great deal, he refers to himself frequently as the 'Son of Man'. The title is found often in the primary sources (Mark-14 times;

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<sup>17</sup> Matthew 11:27 - Luke 10:22, Q







Q-11 times) and is always spoken over the lips of Jesus.

T. W. Manson points out that Jesus begins to use the title frequently and with conviction, following Peter's Confession at Caesarea Philippi - 'Thou art the Christ' (Mark 8:29).

This is very interesting because it appears that while Jesus understood something of his special relationship to God and man up to this point in his ministry he is now completely convinced - he knows for sure. Knowledge of his own person is now complete, and the lines of his mission have become clearly defined.

The fundamental meaning which the 'Son of Man' takes in the mind of Jesus may be seen in two motifs: (a) exaltation, as 'Ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and coming with the cloud of heaven (Mark 14:62); and (b) humiliation, as, 'The Son of Man must suffer many things' (Mark 8:31). It is evident that Christ is to be the One in whom God and man meet, for in Him we see loyalty to God and service to man in an unparalleled way.

Really the 'Son of Man' concept holds within itself both the 'Messiah-Son of God' connotation as we have described it and the 'Servant of the Lord' idea, which was mentioned. The 'Servant' aspect highlights the volitional element of Christ's religious experience.

#### Servant of The Lord

Here we see clearly Christ's humility and sense of mission. He believed himself engaged to bring true knowledge



of his father to the nation. Says William Manson;

He who is called to be the Messiah-Son of God sees the way marked out for him by the practice of the Servant, and teaches also that only through humiliation and self-sacrifice of the Servant is 'the glory of the Son of Man' to be attained. <sup>18</sup>

Two principal lines of thought are embodied in this title Manson suggests: the line of ethic and the line of sacrifice. The latter is seen as the fulfillment of the sufferings predicted of the Servant in Isaiah 53. 'The Son of Man came - - - to give his life as a ransom for many' (Mark 10:45). The former, or ethical line, is apparent in that Jesus regarded the Servant as affording the supreme example of righteousness and humility. It is seen also in his patience, steadfastness and perfect trust in God. The climax of this mode of thought in the mind of Jesus, is verbalized by the Sermon on the Mount and lived in the Cross.

Jesus as Seen by the People

One of the most striking things about the ministry of our Lord is the authority with which he speaks and the assurance with which he acts. His contemporaries were constantly amazed and stood in awe before him. Time and again we hear that people were amazed, sometimes shocked at his sayings and doings. In Mark 1:22 the reason for amazement at his teaching is given: it is because 'he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes'. It is not just that His words are novel and unorthodox, it seems that some-

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<sup>18</sup> William Manson; Jesus The Messiah, The Westminster Press. Philadelphia, P.157.



thing more is present. In our mind it is because in the presence of Jesus people knew themselves to be confronted by the holy; it is the realization of Christ's sonship. It is not simply that Jesus receives and gives an inspired message, but rather that the spiritual source of all inspiration has possession of him, and hence it is as though God himself were speaking.

One could present evidence at great length to support the above proposition, but I do not believe that this is necessary. The truth is almost self-evident, so I propose only to present three New Testament passages from the Marcan account in the assurance that the scripture will speak for itself. These passages will highlight faith, knowledge and devotion:

1. And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him. And there was a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years, and who suffered much under physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better, but rather grew worse. She had heard the reports about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. For she said, "If I touch even his garments, I shall be made well". And immediately the hemorrhage ceased; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. (Mark 5:24-29)
2. And Jesus went on with his disciples, to the Villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do men say that I am?", and they told him, "John the Baptist, and others say Elijah, and others one of the prophets." And he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Christ." And he charged them to tell no one about him. (Mark 8:27-30)
3. And while at Bethany in the House of Simon the leper, as he sat at table, a woman came with an alabaster



PROPERTY OF THE UNIVERSITY

The first part of the book is devoted to a general survey of the history of the subject. It begins with a discussion of the early attempts to explain the origin of life, and then proceeds to a consideration of the various theories which have been advanced since the time of Darwin. The author then discusses the evidence in support of each of these theories, and finally comes to the conclusion that the most probable explanation is that life originated in a simple, non-living material, and that it has since developed through a series of gradual changes.

The second part of the book is devoted to a detailed examination of the evidence in support of the various theories. It begins with a discussion of the evidence in support of the theory of spontaneous generation, and then proceeds to a consideration of the evidence in support of the theory of evolution. The author then discusses the evidence in support of the theory of the origin of life in a simple, non-living material, and finally comes to the conclusion that the most probable explanation is that life originated in a simple, non-living material, and that it has since developed through a series of gradual changes.

The third part of the book is devoted to a detailed examination of the evidence in support of the various theories. It begins with a discussion of the evidence in support of the theory of spontaneous generation, and then proceeds to a consideration of the evidence in support of the theory of evolution. The author then discusses the evidence in support of the theory of the origin of life in a simple, non-living material, and finally comes to the conclusion that the most probable explanation is that life originated in a simple, non-living material, and that it has since developed through a series of gradual changes.



jar of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the jar and poured it over his (Jesus') head. But there were some who said to themselves indignantly, "Why was the ointment thus wasted?" - - - But Jesus said, "Let her alone, why trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me." (Mark 14:3-6)



## CHAPTER IV

### RUDOLF OTTO

#### 1. Introduction

Few books have made as great an impact upon the religious world as Rudolf Otto's major work, The Idea of the Holy. Published in 1917, at a time when men were disillusioned by war and hence searching for some interpretation of man's life and destiny more satisfying than the secular and purely rational outlook, it came as a ray of heavenly light amid the gathering gloom. Otto's Idea of the Holy provided a re-orientation of life upon a distinctly religious basis, emphasizing a "dimension of depth" in experience which "liberal" Protestant Theology had largely lost from view.

The publication of The Idea of the Holy established Otto almost immediately it would seem, as one of Germany's top theologians. Prior to its publication he had been professor of systematic theology at Gottingen (1904-1914) and at Breslau (1914-1917). In 1917 he was appointed to the same position at Marburg. So great now was the influence of his work that he was offered the highly esteemed chair in Theology at the University of Halle and the University of Berlin. He was soon invited to important lectureships throughout the English-speaking world. In 1924 he visited the United States,



giving the Haskell Lectures at Oberlin College and speaking at other leading American Universities. Some years later he was chosen to give the University of Calcutta Lectures on Comparative Religion, and was also extended the honor of being chosen to deliver the Gifford Lectures at Aberdeen. Failing health however, prevented him finally from filling either of the latter appointments.

## 2. Theological Heritage

Otto's interpretation of religion is most certainly rooted deeply in the spiritual soil of Germany. The normative influence of the Lutheran Communion and of the thought of Luther himself upon Otto is quite apparent. He professes in his *Idea of the Holy* to have gained his understanding of religious experience from Luther's treatise, On the Bondage of the Will, and he constantly quotes Luther to confirm his own position. To the eyes of faith, Luther is convinced, there comes a knowledge of God unattainable by the use of reason. Such an independent religious knowledge necessarily implies that man's rational, conceptual knowledge of reality is limited and incomplete. Luther insists with vigor upon the inability of reason to penetrate to the depths of reality and so to provide adequate statement of God's nature. He makes his position emphatic by referring to the "Whore Reason", - an analogy quite understandable when one recalls that reason left to itself often indulges in unfaithfulness to God. Faith in its entirety for Luther, is an





experience with emotional, cognitive and valuational aspects. This of course sets it apart as completely "sui generis". It contains an insight and produces a conviction which claims to transcend the limit of ordinary reason, and a claim validated not by rational reflection or logical argument, but rather by the immediate consciousness of self-authenticating meaning and worth. From Luther's idea of faith Otto drew principles upon which his own interpretation of religion was gradually constructed.

Friedrich Schleiermacher provided an equally significant influence upon Otto's thought by his Addresses on Religion to its Cultured Despisers. In these addresses Otto was able to find a sympathetic examination of basic religious experience. He likewise found here an explicit recognition and defence of the autonomy of religion which he himself felt so deeply. Schleiermacher, as we have seen, never relinquishes the claim that the entire domain of feeling is the province of religion. He maintains that all deep and moving feeling is in some sense religious, even while he aptly describes the unique emotional quality of religious consciousness. Religious experience, as first described in the Addresses, provides man's sole avenue for apprehending the eternal nature of things. Here and here alone is the true dimension of reality grasped. Religion has its source in that primary contact with the Universe from which all valid rational interpretation must derive. Schleiermacher derives religious knowledge



directly from religious feeling, and Otto achieves a reconstruction of this position by a description of religious consciousness in terms of feeling and value.

German theology during the last half of the nineteenth century was dominated in no small measure by the work of Albrecht Ritschl. This quite naturally occupied a major place in the theological training Otto received during his period at Gottingen. The original features of Ritschl's theology derive as directly as does the faith of Luther or the cardinal principle of Schleiermacher's Addresses, from an immediate consciousness of the autonomy of religion. As defined by Ritschl, religious autonomy is primarily a matter of value rather than feeling. The feeling that distinguishes religious experience possesses no separate province of its own in human consciousness to the mind of Ritschl, but rather is the product of an independent value-judgement. Also Ritschl consistently maintains that faith in God rests for the Christian upon a unique consciousness of moral and spiritual triumph, an experience of blessedness in the Kingdom of God, and not just upon a consciousness of moral responsibility. Faith in the divinity of Christ is an unmistakable expression of value-judgement in Ritschl's interpretation. Through Christ the Christian is led into the blessedness of God's Kingdom, and for this reason he has the value of God himself for the Christian community. Apart from this value-judgement there is no knowledge of Christ, Ritschl maintains, upon



which Christian belief in his divinity can be based. Otto's own idea of the Holy as an autonomous religious category of value is based directly it would appear, upon Ritschl's concept of independent religious value-judgement.

The names of other theologians could be noted as having had an influence upon Otto's thought, conscious or unconscious. It is more important to note however that the genius of his religion lies not so much in drawing together the significant insights of a century of German theology, though he did this, it is rather the creative synthesis of the best elements of his religious heritage in a new and profound insight of his own. In the work of Rudolf Otto one finds a new and mature concept of the autonomy of religion which has given him a place of enduring influence in Modern Theology. It is to Otto's own contribution that we now turn our attention.

### 3. The Numinous

Rudolf Otto ascribes religion to a direct apprehension of what he calls the "wholly other". The mental state induced or the moment of consciousness, he calls the "numinous". Furthermore he says, "This mental state is perfectly sui generis and irreducible to any other."<sup>1</sup> This implies a specialized capacity, or kind of "sixth sense" which enables man to come into contact with the divine. Psychologically speaking then, Otto would trace religious experience to man's possession of this capacity.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rudolf Otto; The Idea of The Holy, Oxford University Press, London, 1928. P.7.

<sup>2</sup> Walter Hudson Clark; The Psychology of Religion, The MacMillan Company, New York, 1958. P.59.







Three basic elements are distinguished by Otto in the religious consciousness: (1) a qualitatively unique emotional state that always characterizes religious experience (the *sensus numinis*); (2) a completely autonomous interpretation and valuation of life and reality in religious experience (the sacred or holy); and (3) an intuitive religious apprehension of the eternal nature of things independent of and transcending our rational understanding (divination).<sup>3</sup> These elements are individually defined by Otto with sound psychological discrimination and broad historic appreciation. The phenomenology of religion thus achieved is termed by Davidson, as the most original and striking in Modern Theology.

#### 4. Emotional State

Turning to the first of the basic elements as set out by Otto in his interpretation of the numinous, one detects an echo of Scheiermacher's feeling of "absolute dependence". A careful analysis of vital religious experience suggests to Otto that the feeling involved includes a sense of dependence, but is at the same time something distinctly more than this. "Creature-feeling" is the name he gives to this unique experience and writes further, "It is the emotion of a creature, abased and overwhelmed by its own nothingness in contrast to that which is supreme above all creatures."<sup>4</sup> An example of this precise quality of feeling suggests Otto, is expressed in the words of Abraham: "Behold now, I have

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<sup>3</sup> Robert F. Davidson; Rudolf Otto's Interpretation of Religion, Princeton University Press, 1947. P.52.

<sup>4</sup> Rudolf Otto; The Idea of the Holy, P.10.



taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but ashes and dust." (Genesis XVIII 27). Basic to this consciousness of creaturehood there is an immediately-felt "unworthiness" in the presence of the Transcendent and Eternal. This value-judgement marks Otto's point of departure from Schleiermacher's view. The feeling of absolute dependence portrays the status of the worshipper in ontological terms; the consciousness of creaturehood measures his status primarily in terms of value.

Man's emotional response to creature-feeling contains a number of elements. One such element is a peculiar awesomeness and dread. This response is exclusively religious and qualitatively very different from a generalized fear response to some dread thing in the natural environment. Nor is it simply a degree in intensity of the natural fear response; it is an independent emotion of religious dread found in and basic to all religious experience.

A second unique emotional element and very closely associated with the latter, is a feeling of "blank wonder, and astonishment that strikes us dumb, amazement absolute". This element is also uniquely religious. Its character is portrayed unmistakably in the miracle narrative - narratives that attempt to state conceptually the wonder and astonishment so powerfully felt in the original experience. In the Old Testament the weird products of the Prophet Ezekiel's imagination provide further example of such numinous mystery.

Otto proceeds to develop his position by pointing out



that the sense of ultimate mystery and wonder in religion is so overwhelming that it gives rise to the idea of God as "wholly other". The apocalyptic element in Jesus' teaching of the coming kingdom, especially as contained in his gospel of the coming kingdom, supplies an example of Christ's own sense of otherness in his religious experience. This and the fundamental emotional elements of sore amazement and dread that give rise to it, can be seen as present in Christ's agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. Here one sees Jesus shuddering in dread as he wrestles with awesome mystery overshadowing all even as it reveals the divine.

Creature-feeling and its emotional elements of awe and dread do not comprise the emotional quality of the numinous in its entirety, however. Man's deepest and most meaningful consciousness of deity is characterized also by a pervasive feeling of exaltation and bliss. Religious experience is concerned with a "mysterium tremendum et fascinans", with ultimate mystery that is beautiful as well as awesome. Otto writes, "The qualitative content of the numinous experience, to which the mysterious stands as form, is in one of its aspects the element of daunting "awefulness", and "majesty", - - but it is clear that it has at the same time another aspect, in which it shows itself as something uniquely attractive and fascinating - - - The experience of religious bliss."<sup>5</sup> The latter finds adequate expression only in the

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid. P.31.







notion of oneness, even identity with God.

It can be seen from the foregoing that religious consciousness displays a somewhat paradoxical emotional polarity. The final moment of exaltation and bliss is as essential to it as are the earlier moments of creature feeling, and neither pole ever destroys or entirely supplants the other. This contrast is clearly the central fact of historic Christianity, the Cross of Christ, "the event of Golgotha, with its terror and its bliss".<sup>6</sup>

#### 5. Sanctity, Sin and Salvation (The Idea of the Holy)

These three, the sense of Sanctity, the consciousness of Sin, and the assurance of Salvation, Otto distinguishes as autonomous religious categories in which the unique emotional quality of the numinous finds mature expression. In these categories there is recognition of meaning and value that is peculiarly and essentially religious. They provide a frame of reference without which sound interpretation of religion cannot be made.

The relationship between the moral and the religious is very fundamental in human experience, so much so that the moral meaning has become an essential element in the category of the Holy. Otto however, makes a very definite distinction between moral and religious elements of experience. The English term sacred, affords very fundamental distinction to the mind of Otto. In man's idea of the sacred there is

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid. P.177.



expression of numinous feeling involving moral implication in no way. It is an autonomous religious category which enables man to interpret adequately the deepest significance of his experience. An example of this in the Old Testament can be found in The Book of Job. Job's solution to the problem of unmerited suffering is found in an immediate consciousness of transcendent meaning and value, an experience of sanctity incomprehensible and overwhelming yet utterly satisfying. This is a truly religious and not a moral answer to the problem. The Christian interpretation of the cross is a nobler expression of the same religious insight.

Man's consciousness of sin and his assurance of salvation give further significant evidence of autonomous religious judgement. In man's religious life there comes a sense of sacredness and also there comes an awareness of creaturehood and profaneness when confronted in experience with that which possess numinous sanctity. Otto maintains that in the gradual maturing of religious consciousness the separate religious category of meaning and value, that of essential profaneness and sin, is soon formulated and used to express meaning. Two Biblical passages afford an especially clear illustration of religious self-devaluation or sense of sin: the words of Isaiah upon his vivid experience of the holiness of Jehovah: "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell among people of unclean lips.",



and Peter's cry, when confronted by the holy in the person of Jesus: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."<sup>7</sup>

In the idea of original sin and guilt, the full force of man's religious self-devaluation becomes immediately clear. Here we do not perceive the product of abstract theological theory says Otto, but rather we see reflected man's immediate consciousness of his own "natural" profaneness and unworthiness. Further, this sense of unworthiness is not occasioned by any individual transgression of moral delinquency. It is attached rather to man's very nature as 'creature', which in itself renders him profane, "wholly-other" than the sacred. It is in this sense sin is inherent in human nature itself and not by way of faulty moral conduct on the part of Adam and Eve. In these terms the theological doctrine of original sin is simply an effort to state in conceptual terms the implications of this deeply felt religious devaluation.

The assurance of salvation is cited by Otto as a third uniquely religious recognition of meaning and value in religious experience. In religious experience (numinous) the vivid awareness by the creature of his own unworthiness in the presence of the sacred or holy, is accompanied by an urge to escape the impotence and profaneness of finite human existence. This is seen in the Old Testament idea of "atonement". This Hebrew concept Otto traces back to the need felt for a covering or shield against the wrath of

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid. P.52.







deity. In the "religion of Yahweh" it is evident that the sinner, overwhelmed by his own profaneness and unworthiness, sought a covering or protection in certain rites which were only later interpreted as acts of moral consecration.<sup>8</sup> The important point is that these rites established a new relation to Yahweh through which man's "natural" profaneness was overcome. "This uniqueness as well as cardinal importance of salvation in traditional Christian experience finds forceful theological expression in the doctrine that only through Christ can man be saved."<sup>9</sup>

So it is apparent that Otto places great emphasis upon the immediate and vividly-felt apprehension in religious consciousness of a transcendent and objective source of meaning and value. Religious consciousness in general is conditioned by autonomous categories of meaning and value that relate man directly to a transcendent spiritual reality and the cardinal concepts of religious life; the sense of sanctity, the conviction of sin and the assurance of salvation, are intelligible only in terms of uniquely religious evaluation of human nature and experience. In these categories of meaning and value moreover, the unique emotional quality of the "numinous" finds mature expression.

## 6. Divination

In our discussion of Otto's interpretation of religious consciousness we have considered two basic elements which are

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid. P.56.

<sup>9</sup> Rudolf Otto's Interpretation of Religion; P.96.



believed to be unique in religious experience: "Numinous", a qualitatively unique emotional state; and the "Idea of the Holy" or sacred, a completely autonomous interpretation and valuation of life and reality. We turn now to "Divination", the third and final feature of an autonomous religious experience. Divination is defined as an intuitive apprehension of the eternal nature of things independent of and transcending our rational understanding.<sup>10</sup>

The English translator of the Idea of the Holy was particularly impressed by Otto's idea of divination. He gives it special attention in his introduction. "Here we are shown," he writes, "that the religious feeling properly involves a unique kind of apprehension, sui generis, not to be reduced to ordinary intellectual or rational 'knowing' with its terminology of notions and concepts, and yet - and this is the paradox of the matter - itself a genuine 'knowing', the growing awareness of deity."<sup>11</sup> For Otto the prophet Isaiah's temple-experience (Ch.6) provides the most mature apprehension together with the most effective artistic portrayal of such religious divination of deity. Artistic expression of divination can hardly be called knowledge in the usual sense of knowing but Otto insists that in religious feeling, prior to its later conceptual or philosophical interpretation, there is an immediate intuition that must be recognized as valid knowledge.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid. P.52

<sup>11</sup> The Idea of the Holy, Preface, PP.XIV-XV.



Men are never content to leave their divination of deity in the form of artistic symbol however, and invariably attempt its expression by conceptual symbol. Otto coins the term "ideogram" and attaches it to concepts drawn from ordinary sense experience and rational thought to represent and suggest the transcendent meaning of numinous feeling. Otto's analysis shows convincingly that these ideograms become an essential aspect of man's idea of God.

Among the most striking symbols or ideograms in which the unique emotional complex of the numinous has found expression are the "wrath" and the "grace" of God. (Numinous tremendum and fascinans) Otto contends that the wrath and the grace of God are really analogies that are not to be mistaken for knowledge of a scientific or conceptual sort. In the minds of those who vividly apprehend tremendum it is the awesome sanctity of the natural universe in power incalculable, arbitrary, overwhelming and terrifying, akin to uncontrollable human wrath. From the opposite pole of numinous feeling (fascinans-bliss) experience finds expression in ideogram as the "grace of God". "Just as wrath, taken in a purely rational or ethical sense, does not exhaust the profound element of awefulness which is locked in the mystery of deity, so neither does 'graciousness' exhaust the profound element of wonderfulness and rapture which lies in the mysterious beautiful experience of deity."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid. P.32.

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The most striking ideogram or analogy of this sort employed to indicate the antithesis of the holy to the natural order is that of God as the "wholly-other". The "wholly-other" is felt as not only beyond the grasp of reason and conceptual understanding, Otto writes, but as that "whose kind and character are incommensurable with our own, something which not merely overtops our every concept, but astounds us by its absolute and utter difference from our whole nature".<sup>13</sup> Otto points out that this is not an ideogram invented by himself but one which has had long standing and use. Centuries before the Christian era it was the phrase used in the Upanishads to express the deepest insight of philosophical Hinduism concerning deity. Augustine incorporates it as a basic aspect of Christian theology, finding he can describe the God of his deepest experience only as wholly-other, and it is by this term that the Barthian theologians express their religious consciousness of the "otherness" of God.

R. F. Davidson writes, that only in such symbolic fashion and by analogies of the sort described above can immediate divination of the holy in numinous feeling find expression. If taken literally, ideograms like the wrath of God and even the grace of God degenerate into crude anthropomorphism.<sup>14</sup> To the mind of Otto the function of ideogram or myth is to embody the awareness in religious experience of a transcendent meaning and value.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid. PP.28, 185.

<sup>14</sup> Rudolf Otto's Interpretation of Religion; P.120.

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Summary

In religious consciousness as Otto portrays it, the sense of the numinous is the initial and concrete expression in feeling of an autonomous religious category of meaning and value. There is no awareness of God as external objective reality that is independent of this consciousness of religious value. The cognitive significance of the numinous depends ultimately upon the metaphysical significance of the category of the holy. Only in so far as this autonomous religious category of meaning and value is recognized as a form by which a transcendent reality is known, can the transcendent quality of the Holy, as immediately apprehended in numinous feeling and symbolically stated in ideogram, be legitimately accepted as knowledge.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid. P.131.

The first of these is the fact that the accounting system is a social construct. It is not a neutral, objective system that simply reflects the underlying economic reality. Rather, it is a system that is shaped by the interests and values of the people who use it. This means that the accounting system can be used to manipulate the financial data in order to achieve a desired outcome. For example, a company might use accounting to make its financial performance appear better than it actually is, in order to attract investors or to secure a loan. This is a clear violation of the principle of objectivity, which is one of the core values of the accounting profession.

The second of these is the fact that the accounting system is a complex system. It involves a large number of different accounting methods and procedures, which are often difficult to understand and interpret. This complexity can lead to confusion and disagreement among those who use the system. For example, different companies might use different accounting methods to calculate their profits, which can make it difficult to compare their financial performance. This is a clear violation of the principle of consistency, which is another core value of the accounting profession.

The third of these is the fact that the accounting system is a system of power. It is a system that is used by those in power to control and manage the resources of an organization. This means that the accounting system can be used to create and maintain a hierarchy of power within an organization. For example, the accounting system can be used to determine which departments or individuals are responsible for the organization's financial success or failure. This is a clear violation of the principle of transparency, which is a third core value of the accounting profession.

## CHAPTER V

### THE SACRED: DEFINITION AND RESPONSE

Strong Contemporary support for our thesis is found in the very extensive and thorough studies of Mircea Eliade. Eliade was born in Bucharest in 1907, and later gained his degrees at the University of Calcutta. A very eminent historian of religion, his teaching and research have taken him to England, Italy, Sweden, Portugal, Spain, Germany, France, Greece and the United States. At present he is professor of the history of religion at the University of Chicago. He has written countless articles, many of which have been translated into several languages. His international reputation rests primarily on two outstanding books: The History of Religion, and Patterns of Comparative Religion. The latter work published in 1958 is his finest and has already gone into its third French edition and has been translated into German, Spanish and Italian.

Mircea Eliade, insists that religious phenomena have a unique or irreducible element, which he terms the sacred or the holy. To support this point of view he examines in great detail various "hierophanies", manifestations of the sacred, to be found in world religion. His material is not organized after the evolutionary pattern beginning with the most





elementary manifestations of religion such as "Mana", then going on to totemism, fetishism, the worship of nature and spirits, thence to gods and demons, and coming finally to the monotheistic idea of God. This would presuppose a movement in religious phenomenon from the simple to the complex, which he maintains is a mere hypothesis which cannot be proved.

It is our belief too, that religion cannot be fully explained in terms of sociology, psychology, linguistics, aesthetics or economics. Man responds to the Holy which stands outside the self in society, hence religion cannot be completely or adequately defined in psychological or sociological terms.

Says Eliade, "we have yet to meet anywhere a simple religion, consisting only of the most elementary hierophanies."<sup>1</sup> This we believe is because man, no matter how primitive his state, responds to the Holy with his whole psyche - reason, emotion and will. There is not a culture on the face of the earth thus far discovered without a religious attitude and manner of expression.

The "faculties" of man's mind receive stimuli from beyond and as this experience filters through his personality, the style of religious expression is fashioned. Eliade gives considerable space to a discussion of the manner of religious thought and expression which we will consider in a later chapter.

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<sup>1</sup> Mircea Eliade; Patterns in Comparative Religion, Sheed & Ward; London: New York, 1958. P.XII, Forward.



Let us turn first of all to a consideration of the essential uniqueness of religion; the Sacred.

A thing becomes sacred insofar as it embodies (that is reveals) something other than itself. Here we need not be concerned with whether that something other comes from its unusual shape, its efficacy or simply its "power"; - or whether it springs from the thing's fitting in with some symbolism or other, or has even been given it by some rite of consecration, or acquired by its being placed in some position that is instinct with sacredness (a sacred zone, a sacred time, some "accident" - a thunderbolt, crime, sacrilege or such). What matters is that a hierophany implies a choice, a clear cut separation of this thing which manifests the sacred from everything else around it. There is always something else, even when it is some whole sphere that becomes sacred - the sky, for instance, or a certain familiar landscape, or the "fatherland". The thing that becomes sacred is still separated in regard to itself, for it only becomes a hierophany at the moment of stopping to be a mere profane something, at the moment of acquiring a new "dimension" of sacredness. <sup>2</sup>

The third dimension, or dimension of depth which was referred to in our consideration of holiness in the Old Testament, is evidenced again here. No matter what the object, when assigned sacredness, this refers to something back and beyond itself. It must be noted too, that that which is sacred at once becomes imbued with magico - religious powers. This sacred or magic quality is almost always associated with everything unusual, unique, new, or perfect. Perfection in any sphere is in a sense frightening, and this sacred or magic quality of perfection may provide an explanation for the awe that even the most civilized

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid. P.13.



societies seem to feel when faced with a genius or a saint. Perfection is not of this world. It is different, it comes from somewhere else. The same applies to the alien, the strange or the new. Levy Bruhl, in his work, Primitive Mentality, points out that in the Celebes if the fruit of the banana appears in the middle of the stalk rather than in the usual place at the end, it is "measa". The people say it entails the death of its owner and so in a very special sense there is the element of awe and fear. When a certain variety of pumpkin bears two fruits upon a single stem, which is similar to twin birth, it is "measa". It will cause the death of the family of the man who owns the field in which it was grown. Strange and unusual ways of doing things, new and different foods, and habits are often regarded as manifestation of hidden powers. At Tana, in the New Hebrides, all disasters were attributed to white missionaries who had come with new and strange ways.

The negative valuation of the sacred is seen in what is generally termed, the taboo. The Malagasy word which corresponds to taboo is fady or faly, which means what is sacred, forbidden, out of bounds, incestuous, ill-omened.<sup>3</sup> Fady were all new merchandise brought on the island by the missionaries such as horses, rabbits, and especially European medicines - salt, iodine, rum pepper and the like. These were transformed into kratophanies, that is manifestation of special power,

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<sup>3</sup> Van Gennep; definition and examples from his monograph. Tabou et Totemisme a Madagascar.







and therefore feared and venerated. Such taboos are not enduring however, for as soon as the things are known and can be fitted into the primitive cosmos, they lose all power to upset the natural order. The Malagasy use the term "loza" for all that which is outside or runs counter to the natural order. The elements of a taboo are always the same involving things, persons, or places which seem somehow to belong to a different order of being and which therefore may produce fatal effect at the level of man. Certain food is so holy that it must not be eaten at all. There is a series of taboos applying to women, to sex, to birth, and a series arising out of special situations which render holy the place involved.

A very definite ambivalence however, is evident in the sacred. Persons, places, and things, which possess power not of this world, both attract and repel as it were, at the same time. The attitude of a person to the holy is on the one hand, the hope of securing and strengthening his own reality by fruitful contact with it; on the other, he fears he may lose everything if he is totally possessed by it. This ambivalence of attitude toward the sacred, says Eliade, is found not only where you have negative hierophanies (manifestations of the sacred, such as fear of corpses, of spirits, or anything defiled) but it is also found even in the most developed religious forms.

The Melanesian idea of Mana sheds more light on the

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subject. Mana is, for the Melanesians, that mysterious but active power which belongs to certain people, and generally to the souls of the dead and all spirits.<sup>4</sup> The tremendous act of creating the cosmos could have only been performed by the Mana of the deity, the head of a family possesses Mana, a particularly cunning animal possesses it. The only reason persons, animals, and things possess Mana however, is because they have received it from a higher being, or in other words, because of their special participation in or sharing of the sacred. If a stone for example, is found to have supernatural power, it has because a spirit has associated itself with it. Mana is a force different in quality from physical forces and it works arbitrarily. Everything which seems to man to have an over-plus, to be especially effective, dynamic creative or perfect, has Mana. Some authors have attempted to place the origin of all religion in the Melanesian Mana and to term it the first phase in the development of Religion. Such a theory is without consistent support however, for though the idea of Mana may be found outside the Melanesian area, it is not a universal idea. Although it represents an elementary level (simple form) of religious manifestation, this does not mean in any sense the most primitive psychologically, or the oldest chronologically.

Another evidence of this same sort of force, a force that can make things powerful and real in the fullest sense, is

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<sup>4</sup>Codrington, *The Melanesians*, 1891; P.118.



found among the North American Indian. The Sioux call the force "wakan". It is a force which exists in the universe but which only makes itself known in extraordinary phenomena such as the sun, the moon, the wind and so on. The Iroquois use the word "orenda" to express the same idea. A storm for example holds "orenda" within itself. The "orenda" of a bird that is hard to bring down is very cunning, a man who is enraged is overcome with "orenda". It must be remembered though that not every one possesses Mana, wakan, orenda; only divinities, heroes, souls of the dead, or persons and things in some way associated with the sacred, such as sorcerers, fetishes, idols and the like. Paul Schebesta, a modern ethnologist, writing about the African pygmies has this to say with respect to their term for what we have been discussing;

'Megbe' is everywhere, but its power is not shown everywhere, with the same intensity, nor in the same manner. Some animals are richly endowed with it; one man may possess more 'Megbe', another less. Capable men become eminent simply because of the amount of Megbe they amass. Sorcerers too have a great deal. It seems to be power bound up with the soul-shadow, destined to disappear with it at death and either transfer itself to someone else, or be changed into the Totem. <sup>5</sup>

The elementary hierophanies and kratophanies are far from being the whole of the religious experience of "primitives". No religion has ever been found consisting only of such elementary manifestations. Categories of the sacred always show themselves as wider than mere manifestations of the

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<sup>5</sup> Paul Schebesta; Les Pygmées, Paris, 1940. P.64 - Quoted by Eliade.







unusual, of Mana, of ancestor-worship, belief in spirits and the like. Belief in a Supreme Being, Creator, omnipotent, and dwelling in the heavens appears to some extent among almost all primitives. The Australian sky gods are a good example of this.

Among the tribes of South-East Australia (Kamilaroi, Wiradjuri, Euahlayi) the supreme divinity is known as "Baiaame". This deity is believed to dwell in the sky, beside great streams of water, and he is believed to receive the souls of the innocent. The sun and the moon are his 'sons', thunder is his voice, he causes the rain to fall, and is both creator and recreator. Other tribes on the east coast (Muring) believe in a similar being known as "Daramulum". This name, as Baiaame, is made known to the religious initiate only. The women and children know him only as 'father' (pagang) and 'lord' (biambam). Initiation consist mainly in a solemn demonstration of the "bull-roarer". This is a piece of wood about six inches long and a little under an inch and a half wide with a piece of string through a hole at one end. When it is swung around it makes a noise like thunder or a bull roaring. The strange groaning of the "bull-roarer" from the jungle at night fills the uninitiated with a holy fear, for they believe that the sound means that the god is coming.

Bunjil is the Supreme Being of the Kulin tribes and he also is believed to dwell high in the heavens. Garomitch is another divine figure who intercedes for the people with



Bunjil. Bunjil created the earth, trees, animals and man himself (whom he fashioned of clay, breathing a soul into him through the nose, the mouth and the navel). It is believed that Bunjil has himself withdrawn from the world, having given his son "Bimbeal" power over the earth, and his daughter Karakarook power over the sky. He stays above the clouds, like a "lord" with a great sword in his hand.

In general says Eliade, it is true to say that these divine beings of the Australians preserve a direct and concrete connection with the sky, with the world of stars and meteors.<sup>6</sup> They stand above and beyond man. All are believed to have created the universe and man. They are sacred and good (called Our Father) and in their short stay upon the earth they instituted moral laws. They reward the upright and defend morality. It is interesting to note that while these Supreme Beings are a very real part of mankind's experience of the sacred, they have almost no place in the Cult. Other religious forces, (totemism, ancestor-worship, mythologies of the moon and sun) take their place.

It was said earlier that everything out of the ordinary, large-scale, or novel could become a hierophany - a manifestation of the sacred. We looked then at the Australian sky gods or supreme beings. Now we come to the inter-relation or association of these. Sky gods are not limited to Australian "primitives" certainly. The Konde of Tanganyika believe in a

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<sup>6</sup> Mircea Eliade; Patterns In Comparative Religion, P.42.



Supreme Being, Kyola or Lesa, who like the other Supreme Beings of the Africans, is endowed with all the majesty of a heavenly, creating, omnipotent, and law-giving God. Lesa however, is not limited to showing himself by means of manifestations from the sky such as thunder or lightening. Fraser in his work, The Worship of Nature says that anything great of its kind, such as a great ox or even a great he-goat or any other impressive object is called "Kyala". By this it is meant that God takes up his abode temporarily in these things. God is walking on the face of the waters when a great storm lashes the lake into fury. An earthquake is caused by His mighty footstep. Lightening is God coming down in anger. God may also come down and enter the body of a lion or a snake, and it is in this form that he walks about among men to behold their doings.

In these examples we see hierophanies given their value by being seen as part of a manifestation of the Supreme Being. Historically, it is difficult to say which came first: whether belief in a Supreme Being came before the notion that the extraordinary was a sign of the sacred, or vice versa, or whether the two religious experiences came at about the same time. The important thing for us is that, both hierophanies and the idea of Supreme Being, arise out of the experience of the sacred and may be integrated to form a new modality by which the sacred is manifest. It must be noted such does not happen only after theological systematization, but rather





seems to be a spontaneous joining of the simple (hierophany) with the complex (Supreme Being who is a person, creator and omnipotent). It would seem that the common denominator to the many and varied, to the simple and the complex manifestations of God, is the existential experience of the Sacred or Holy.

It is legitimate to conclude from our considerations thus far that there is complexity in religious experience among even the most "primitive". This we believe, is because man responds to the sacred or holy with reason, will and emotion. The notion of Supreme Being; of one who is creator, sustainer, giver of moral law and so on, certainly bears the stamp of the intellect. The element of volition is apparent in the cultic practice which was hinted at in reference to the "bull-roarer", initiate, initiation and the like. The emotional response is obvious in the ambivalent sense of awe and wonder - fear and dread, which seems consistently to be the experience when man is confronted by the holy. The emphasis in this chapter, along with a definition of the Sacred, has been on the latter mentioned aspect of man's total response. We turn in the chapter to follow to a discussion of material which highlights intellectual and volitional activity in response to the Sacred.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE SACRED: INTELLECTUAL AND VOLITIONAL ACTIVITY

We find everywhere, even apart from traces of higher religious forms, a system into which elementary hierophanies fit. The 'system' is always greater than they are; it is made up of all the religious experiences of the tribe ('Mana', kratophanies of the unusual, etc., totemism, ancestor worship, and much more), but also contains a corpus of traditional 'theories' which cannot be reduced to elementary hierophanies: for instance, myths about the origin of the world and the human race, myths explaining present human conditions, the theories underlying various rites, moral notions and so on.<sup>1</sup>

#### Mythology

A long history has led up to the modern understanding of Myth and certainly of late a great deal has been said concerning it. A complete review of the long history of thought about myth cannot be undertaken here, but for better understanding a brief discussion of the definitions of myth, as employed in modern Biblical scholarship, will be undertaken. Two main approaches to an understanding of myth have been developed, which differ in decisive points from each other.

One position has been formulated by the classical philologist C. G. Heyne. He defines myth as a necessary and universal form of expression within the early stage of

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<sup>1</sup> Mercea Eliade; Patterns In Comparative Religion, P.31

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man's intellectual development, in which unexplainable events were attributed to the direct intervention of the gods.<sup>2</sup>

This concept of myth has been applied to the Old Testament by the mythical school (Eickhorn, Gabler, G.L. Bauer) and in the New Testament by D. F. Strauss. Of late the view has been defended by R. Bultmann.

This school of thought treats all statements concerning the miraculous and supernatural as 'mythical', insofar as such statements arise from a prescientific or a naive stage of man's consciousness. The difficulty one encounters if he takes this historic-philosophical point of view, is that of false categories. The modern scientific perspective and critical evaluation of material often imposes categories which are not suitable to the subject matter. It means approaching the myth through the eyes of the western mind, and thus restricting from the beginning, the kind of reality which the myth can contain. Karl Jaspers, in his book Myth and Christianity, points out another fundamental error of this approach, and that is rationalism. The phenomena of myth is not taken in its totality, but rather the supernatural of the myth is isolated out. Many hold that these are intimately connected and must thus be considered for a total understanding of the reality imparted by the myth.

The 'narrow' or 'form-critical' definition of myths is greatly different from the above. This concept stems

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<sup>2</sup> B. S. Childs; Myth and Reality In The Old Testament, SCM Press Ltd., 56 Bloomsbury Street, London. P.13.

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originally from the work of the Grimm brothers. In the preface to their Kinder-und Hausmarchen, myth was defined as a literary form concerning stories of gods, which was to be distinguished from other literary types such as legends and fairy tales. The weakness of a definition of this sort is primarily that it is too exclusive. To say that myth is just another literary form is not helpful in understanding the function of the myth within the thinking of the culture. It ignores the substance of the myth, and deals only with superficial structure.

In the field of comparative religion, the general consensus among scholars supports a phenomenological approach to the definition of myth. Eliade comes at myth from this tack and suggests that it arises in response to the sacred. It is an autonomous act of creation by the mind: it is through this act of creation that revelation is brought about - not through the things or events which it makes use of.<sup>3</sup> It is what might be termed a spontaneous expression of man's understanding of reality.

Modern man thinks of the world around him as passive and impersonal, the primitive man conceives of his surroundings as active and living with powers that influence every area of life. Also his intimate contact with nature makes for a receptivity and openness to the powers of nature.

To catch the full meaning and significance of myth one

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<sup>3</sup> Mercea Eliade; Patterns In Comparative Religion, P.426.



must keep in mind as well, the creative spirit of man. He always attempts to order the many and varied impressions received, into an intelligible unified whole. Myth in a plastic, but very real way, attempts to create unity out of chaos. Also, the man of the mythical world never sees the world order as something to be taken for granted. He conceives of the present reality which is thrust upon his senses as having its true basis in a primeval event. In other words, in order to understand the structure of the present and present world occurrence, myth projects the establishment of this order back to an event in the primeval age. Malinowski expresses it this way:

Myth - in its living primitive form, is not merely a story told but a reality lived. It is not in the nature of fiction - - - but is a living reality, believed to have once happened in primeval times, and continuing ever since to influence the world and human destinies.<sup>4</sup>

If myth expresses that which was experienced as a living reality, it also provides the framework for the expression of that reality. Modern studies demonstrate a close connection between myth and cult in very convincing fashion. The reality of the myth enters into the present moment of time and by cultic expression the participant shares in the reality. Both the intellectual and volitional aspects of religious experience then, are seen active in this concept of myth.

Before proceeding to a demonstration of this definition of myth in world religion, one further word for clarification.

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<sup>4</sup> B. Malinowski; Myth in Primitive Psychology, New York, 1954, P.100.



Not all stories concerning primeval events are true myth. In order to be a myth, such a story must bear a 'truth'. Tales are false when their content is 'secular', concerning itself with merely external phenomena of the world. In contrast to this, a story is 'true' when its content is 'holy'. Such stories concern themselves with the creative acts of power of the primeval age which established the order of being, or the origin of life and death.<sup>5</sup>

### Myth in Primitive Religion

A. E. Jensen from his expedition to the East Indies, has clearly demonstrated the relationship between the experience of reality by primitive man and the creative power of myth formation. Jensen cites several examples of Mythology of the Wemale tribe. The Mulua Hainuwele (coconut palm twig) is recounted this way. In primeval times, before there were any coconut palms on the earth, a man called Ameta found a pig while hunting one day. The pig, attempting to escape, drowned and Ameta fished it out of the water. On one tusk of the pig Ameta found a coconut. The same evening as he slept he dreamed of the coconut. In the dream he received the command to plant the nut, which he did. After three days a palm tree had sprung up to full growth. As Ameta climbed into the palm to cut its flower for a drink, he cut his finger by accident. His blood dripped on the flower of the palm. Again after three days he saw that the blood had joined to

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<sup>5</sup> B. S. Childs; Myth and Reality In The Old Testament, P.20.







the juice of the flower and had formed a child. He took her and wrapped her in a leaf of the coconut palm and following three days the child had grown to a marriageable young girl named Hainuwele.

During the time of the great Maro-Dance Hainuwele placed herself in the center of the dancing area where for nine evenings she divided various gifts to the dancers. On the ninth evening Hainuwele was seized by the men, thrown into a deep hole and murdered. On the following day Ameta found her body buried in the hole. He divided it into many parts and with the exception of the arms, buried it. Each piece then transformed itself into things which up to that time had been unknown on the earth, chief among them being the tribe's staple food, the coconut. The arms of the girl were used to construct a large gate through which all men of the tribe were challenged to pass. Those who were unable to do so were changed into animals. In this way the animals of the earth were created.<sup>6</sup>

This myth is characteristic of countless primitive myths and illustrates the things which all have in common. In the first place the story takes place in a primeval age, before the world had received its present order of being. The myth concerns itself with great realities through which life is determined: death, fertility, the origin of fruit trees. Before all these, before the life force which constantly

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid. P.22.



surrounds man in his environment, the native stand in awe and wonder. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that all men in all times sense something sacred in the miracle of birth, and death and rebirth. The decisive moment in the myth related occurs when in the killing of the patron deity (Dema-Gottheit) with whose death the "Urzeit" (Primeval time) ceases, and the present life with its birth, nurture and death commences.

The cultic ritual of the Wemale tribe bears a very clear relationship to the myth. Many ceremonies of fertility are strongly connected with this event of the primeval age. All fertility of life is understood only in connection with death, since the origin of the coconut tree is associated with the death of Hainuwelle. The woman who is sterile slaughters a pig which is then divided and buried. Still later a cultic meal is eaten. In this cultic rite the original power of the primeval is actualized and again set into motion. The participant experiences anew the death and resurrection of Hainuwele evidenced in fertility.

#### The Cosmogonic Egg

A creation myth of the Society Island tells of Taaroa, 'ancestor of all the Gods' and creator of the universe, sitting 'in his shell in darkness from eternity'. The shell was like an egg revolving in endless space. This motif of the cosmogonic egg which is found in Polynesia is also common to ancient India, Indonesia, Iran, Greece, Phoenicia, Latvia,



Estonia, Finland, the Pangwe of West Africa, Central America and the west coast of South America. The centre from which the myth originated is probably the locality of India or Indonesia.<sup>7</sup>

It is particularly important to us to note the ritual or mythological parallels of the cosmogonic egg: in Oceania for example, it is believed that man is born of an egg - so the creation of the cosmos serves as a model for the creation of man. Also in a great many places the egg is connected with symbols and emblems of the renovation of nature and vegetation. The new year tree, Maypoles and so on are decorated with eggs or egg shells. These emblems of vegetation and the new year in a way sum up the myth of periodic creation. The tree is itself a symbol of nature and her unwavering sacredness in renewal. When the egg is added to it, it confirms all these cosmogonic values. In Persia coloured eggs are the appropriate gifts for the New Year, which even today, is still called the feast of the Red Eggs. And the red eggs given at Easter in the Balkan countries are probably also left over from a similar ritual pattern.

To go back a step, there is a mass of myth and legend in which a cosmic tree symbolizes the universe: a tree with seven branches, corresponding to the seven heavens. A central tree or pillar upholds the world, a tree of life or a miraculous tree confers immortality upon all who eat its fruit.

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<sup>7</sup> Mercea Eliade; Patterns In Comparative Religion, P.412.





The influence of this myth can be seen in the Australian totem center - for example, which was very often situated in a group of sacred trees and stones. The tree is to be found in the primitive 'sacred places' of eastern Asia and India. In the pre-Indian civilization of Mahenjo-Daro the sacred places consisted of an enclosure set up around a tree. Such places were found all over India at the time when Buddha was preaching. The Buddhist 'caitya' was sometimes simply a tree, without any altar. Hinduism could do nothing to weaken the significance of these ancient sacred places and so absorbed them into itself and ratified them completely.

The same continuity can be observed in Greece and the Semitic world. Scholars have observed that right up to Hellenistic times the tree beside a rock was used for worship. Primitive Semitic sanctuaries often consisted of a tree and a bethel. The tree of 'asera' (barkless trunk used in place of a green tree) came later to stand alone beside the altar. The Canaanites and Hebrews had their places of sacrifice on a very high hill under every green tree. A post, vertical and substantial, added to the sacred power present in the tree.

Eliade suggests that involved here is the 'idea of center', center of the world, of absolute reality - absolute because it is a repository of the sacred. The tree, with its periodic regeneration, manifested the power of the sacred in the order of life.<sup>8</sup> Since such myth embodies absolute reality the course of life and sacred power, the tree therefore stands at

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid. P.271.



the center of the world.

As well, whether it is a Cosmic Tree, a Tree of Everlasting Life, or a Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, the road leading to it is a 'hard path'. Almost always the thing that symbolizes absolute reality, sacred power and immortality, is hard to attain to. Symbols of all sorts, which are situated at the 'center' are always closely guarded and to get to them is equivalent to an initiation, a "heroic" or "mystical" conquest of immortality.

There is something of a contradiction of duality involved here, however. For while one collection of myths, symbols, and rituals stress the difficulty of entering a "center" without coming to grief, there is a whole further set which clearly state that the center is of easy access. Pilgrimage to the Holy Places is difficult, but a visit to any church is a pilgrimage. The journey to the "center" is wrought with obstacles, yet every city, every temple, every house is at the center of the universe. It seems that in the presence of the Holy man always experiences a dual polarity: awe-fear, attraction-repulsion, suffering-inspiration, wrath-grace.

In the case of the cosmogenic egg there are many instances of how the myth forms the basis for ritual. There is first, its role in the agricultural rituals used in modern times. To ensure that the grain would grow, Finnish peasants used to keep an egg in their pockets throughout the time of sowing, or place an egg in the plowed earth. When the



Germans are sowing flax they sometimes put eggs with it, put an egg in the field, or eat eggs during the time of sowing. Whatever the ritual pattern used, the egg never loses its primary meaning, which is to ensure the repetition of the Act of Creation.

It is clear therefore, that the idea of myth must not be taken to mean simply a fable or fairytale. It must always, if 'true', be significant in terms of man's sense of the sacred, in terms of a primeval event, significant gesture or ritual. From one point of view every myth is 'cosmogonic' because every myth expresses the appearance of a new cosmic 'situation' or primeval event which becomes a paradigm for all time to come. All such myth is very significant in the spiritual experience of primitive man.

### The Myths in Sumerian and Babylonian Religion

The Sumerian and Babylonian Myths share much in common with those of the primitives. The Babylonians were impressed from every side with the overwhelming powers of their surroundings. The experience of superior forces which could suddenly and completely shatter their whole life, remained for them an unchangeable reality. Such power beyond man was both lauded and feared. It is interesting to note that the discovery of writing, sense of chronology and time sequence, had its effect on the formation of myth. The earlier form in the Sumerian myth can be seen to change and develop somewhat under the influence of the Babylonian Civilization.





The full Sumerian myth of creation has not as yet been discovered, but several references to its content allow us considerable insight. In the beginning was the primeval sea (Numma). Out of the Sea birth was given to the cosmic mountain, which comprised both the heaven (AN) as well as earth (Ki). Earth and heaven conceived Enlil, the god of air. Another source has this to add. 'After heaven had been moved away from earth, after earth had been separated from heaven, after the name of man had been fixed - - -'. Then the disturbing factor enters in. Kur, the god of the underworld instigated a battle by carrying off the sky goddess, Ereshkigal. Seeking revenge, Enke in his boat attacks Kur, who was most probably conceived of as a dragon. Although the outcome of the battle is not related, the actual beginning of the world age occurs with this event. We see from this myth that the earth is derived out of primeval waters (chaos) and that creation is not taken for granted, but is connected with the primeval struggle for victory.

The babylonian creation epic 'Enuma Elish' is an imposing literary unity in contrast to the Sumerian Myth. The epic is concerned primarily with creation and undoubtedly had a Sumerian basis. It begins in the primeval age with the birth of the gods from the primeval waters. The present world order is the result of a terrible battle. One of the gods, Marduk has slain the monster Tiamat and thus the world has received its order out of chaos. After his victory, Marduk



was elevated into the heavenly constellation and the 'table of fate' which determined the path of the stars was handed over to Marduk. Something of this is seen in an early quotation:

Thou, Marduk, art the most honoured of the  
                   great gods,  
 Thy decree is unrivalled, thy word is Awe  
 From this day unchangeable shall be thy  
                   pronouncement  
 To raise or bring law - these shall be  
                   (in) thy hand.<sup>9</sup>

Again as man's mythical experience of the sacred conveys the reality of a hand in the ordering of creation, it also affords the actual content of religious life. In the Babylonian cult, the victory of Marduk is re-enacted. The yearly coronation festival receives its meaning as a participation in the power of this original event. The festival assures the enduring world structure for the coming year.

### The Myth in Ancient Egyptian Religion

The Burning Sun and the Annual flooding of the Nile with its life-giving mud have been central and sacred realities to Egyptians of all ages. Egyptian culture has been stamped in every respect by the character of the land. Because of the constant circuit of the sun and the invariable rising and falling of the Nile, the Egyptian conceived of his world as the center of a static order of being. This, coupled with the unchangeableness of the sacred reality known in

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<sup>9</sup> B.S. Childs; Myth and Reality In The Old Testament, P.26.



religious experience, influenced the formation of myth.

The chief myth of Egyptian mythology relates how King Osiris was murdered by his brother Set. Isis, who had mourned his death finally discovers his dismembered corpse and is able to conceive from the half-animated Osiris a son named Horus. He in turn conquers Set and assumes the throne of Egypt as King.

This myth was carried over into every sphere of Egyptian life. With the death of the king his power which maintained the world returned to the earth, where it continued to work for supporting the world order. Since the fertility of the land depended upon the annual increase of the Nile, the Nile became a sign of the power of Osiris. In similar manner the power of the dead god shows itself in the growth of grain. So in the myth an eternal truth was discovered which absorbed even the irrevocable changes of death.

In summary we may say that myth, whatever its nature, is always a precedent and an example - a precedent for the expressions of reality as a whole, and an example for man's action (sacred or profane). Myth reveals a divine archetype and then religious man begins to imitate that which he 'knows'. In the presence of the Holy man is projected into eternity. "Human existence therefore takes place on two parallel planes: that of the temporal, of change and illusion, and that of eternity, of substance and of reality - - -. The ideal of the religious man is that everything he does should be done ritually, should in other words, be a sacrifice".<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Mercea Eliade; Patterns In Comparative Religion, P.460.





## CONCLUSION

We have given attention to considerable and varied material since our outset, so perhaps now it would be appropriate to draw some of the ends together. We began by a discussion of the psychological sources of religion as proposed by Thomas Aquinas, Friedrich Schleiermacher and Sigmund Freud. These men were chosen because it is primarily out of their theories that our thesis arises. Separately, the theories of these men are too exclusive to be representative of the facts as they are more fully known in experience today. Taken together they contribute greatly to our fuller understanding of the nature and origin of religious experience.

The Social Sciences have proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that both heredity and environment play very decisive roles in the molding of man's personality. At the same time we know that religion has the power to change personality completely. Such is known because it happens. Experience and observation insist that the center of this power is a Divine Being outside and beyond man. Man responds to the Holy, or to a particular situation where there is an awareness of the divine, in a universal fashion. It cannot be consistently maintained that religious behavior is motivated by a special religious faculty of man, but rather it seems that man responds to the Holy with his full native equipment. There is a stir of the total personality to the presence of



God, fashioned though personality may be by heredity and environment. Man may be wholly involved religiously and the stamp of the total personality -(intellect, feeling and will)- is apparent in religious expression.

Our purpose has been three-fold in the chapters which have preceeded. Firstly, to establish the impulse of religion as beyond man and to show how out of experience this power is described as Sacred or Holy. Secondly, we have attempted clearly to point up how man responds to the Holy with emotion, reason, and volition. Thirdly, the manner of religious expression has been shown to bear the imprint of these primary principles of personality.

The Old Testament presents a clearly set out concept of the Holy. The Hebrew root for holy denotes primarily that which is separate. In its original usage in the Old Testament the root stands for the essential difference between God and man. According to the experience of those we read about in the Old Testament, God and man are separate or different because their awareness of Him was accompanied by a sense of the sacred or holy. The holiness experience which they had was essential to their faith, giving it depth, or if you like, a third dimension.

The term holy is not used frequently in the New Testament but it is apparent that the Old Testament concept has been embodied and given still richer meaning in the person of Jesus Christ. The striking reaction of persons in the presence



of Jesus is that of wonder and amazement. Here was one certainly, in whom the power and love of God was active. He spoke with a divine authority which gave him a power over men's lives which had not heretofore been witnessed. As Moses and Isaiah became very keenly aware of God's holy presence when called of Him, so those who were confronted by this special power in Christ, knew Him to be of God. In the presence of Christ's purity and holiness men were motivated to utter such phrases as this, "depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man". And of course Peter confessed Him to be the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Jesus thought of God as His Father and of Himself accordingly, as the Son of God. This for Jesus was a very sacred relationship and one which demanded the ultimate sacrifice. For Jesus God was Holy, He was sovereign power, sovereign love and grace.

For Paul Christ was all in all. God, the Holy One of Israel, was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. Christ was holiness come to life, a dynamic of love and sacred power which man could both possess and be possessed by. Christ, to the mind and heart of Paul, was a living mercy seat which made it possible now for God's holiness to deal with man's profaneness. What had not been possible in the past is made a reality in Christ. In Christ the infinite and the finite meet; in Him God shows an infinite concern of the Creator for the creature; in Him God and man may be one.







Paul never ceases to stand in awe and wonder before this; that man in his sinfulness should be so highly privileged as to be allowed to partake of the essence of God's glorious nature of love and purity and truth and holiness.

In his discussion of 'the Numinous' Rudolf Otto ascribes religion to a direct apprehension of the "wholly other". Here again the apartness and beyondness from man of the center of religious impetus is defined. In the presence of the Holy, man becomes aware of his creaturehood. He experiences 'creature-feeling', or the emotion of a creature abased and overwhelmed by a sense of his own nothingness in the presence of that which is above all creatures (Creator). This has been shown to be true from a study of the Old Testament as we have mentioned and Eliade presents considerable support for its validity in his studies. Eliade notes that among "primitives" all objects, places, and persons which are assigned sacredness, point to something back and beyond themselves - to something not of this world order, such as perfection, genius, purity and so on.

Man then, senses a power in the universe which is not his own, but divine. The idea which comes out of the experience of the power and presence of God is that of holiness, or that which is sacred. This dynamic, not a static holiness, came in human form in the person of Jesus Christ. Whereas man was unable to completely understand the holiness of God before the time of Jesus, he may now know fully by



looking to Jesus.

Men have always been emotionally stirred by the holy. Persons, places and things which reveal something of the sacred seem always to arouse a sense of ambivalence in those whom they confront. From his study, Eliade found that the hierophany almost always arouses fear in the person who recognizes it. One can never be sure as to how this force of holiness will behave. At the same time, when in the presence of the Holy one experiences a strong emotional tug, almost a passionate pull, toward it. Persons who experience sacred power want to possess it, but are afraid to be completely possessed by it.

This idea was very clearly drawn out in our discussion of the 'sense of mystery' in chapter two. "Who is able to stand before Jehovah, this holy God". (L Sam 6:20). Experience in these times found that there was something incalculable about the operation of divine holiness and so man stood in awe and fear before it. Moses and Isaiah as we saw, knew something of this feeling. Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God. Yet Moses was compelled by the Holy to do God's will. Isaiah points up God's holiness in a way never before conceived. Even the great seraphim cover their faces before the glory of God. Isaiah himself is completely spellbound by the holiness of Yahweh and gives himself completely to Him.

In our study of the Holy in the New Testament we took



particular note of the emotional stir evident in the religious experience of Mary Magdalene at the tomb of Jesus, the disciples at Galilee, Paul on the road to Damascus, and mention was made of Jesus' own religious experience at the time of his baptism. One can almost sense the tremor in the lives of these people when confronted by the Holy, yet in the New Testament the emotional response is more positive in character than it appears among primitives or in the Old Testament record. A sense of joy and excitement, of love and devotion, is the more universal characteristic. Men find themselves free from the bonds of sin and experience the same expansiveness of spirit and emotional elation known by a slave set free or a captive bird set free to wing through the clear blue of the sky.

Otto terms this a unique emotional state; a feeling of 'blank wonder' and astonishment. Man's deepest and most meaningful consciousness of deity is characterized by a pervasive feeling of exaltation and bliss. The experience of religious bliss becomes a reality at the moment a person is at one with God.

The intellectual, as well as the emotional element of religious experience has been demonstrated clearly to be a reality in the materials we have covered. It was suggested that myth, that is a story which contains an eternal truth, arises in response to the sacred. Myth is an autonomous act of creation by the mind which reveals something of the reality





of God. Considerable myth may be found in both the Old and New Testaments. For example the stories of creation as recorded in the book of Genesis, appear to be related to ancient Babylonian Mythology. Basically the spiritual truth contained in such myth is that God fashioned and made the heavens, the earth, and man, and also, what He created is of real worth. The sky gods among the tribes of south-east Australia manifest spontaneous intellectual activity in religious experience. These are conceived of as supreme beings, omnipotent, the source of creativity, and the source of the all good. In the second chapter we dealt with intellectual response to the holy under the headings of majesty, purity, and righteousness. We believe God to be holy because our reason knows Him to possess the way of the good life; a life full of meaning and purpose and resulting in character.

Christ's understanding of God and Himself and Paul's development of this is solid evidence of mind at work in religious experience. Jesus understood that His was a special mission under God and of course He had a very unique idea of the nature of God. The love of God takes on real and vital meaning in the person of Jesus, as in devotion to the Father, He expresses God's redemptive activity in the world. Paul believes too that God cares for all men, Jew and Gentile, slave and free and this gospel of love and universality he takes to the ends of the world.



Man responds to the Holy with feeling and emotion and he is also moved to action and devotion. As we have just said both Jesus and Paul believed themselves called of God to fulfil a mission. Religion is not religion at all apart from dedication and service. This is true of religion wherever it is found. Always there is that which is required of a man, that which he must do, This we saw in the cultic practices discussed in chapters five and six. We saw in our discussion of the Old Testament that God was believed to be the Supreme Law-Giver who must be obeyed, and always those who have known Him have done His will.

Finally, what can we say of religious behavior? Surely it is self-evident that personality structures the way in which religion comes into view. While religious experience is universal not all express themselves concerning it in exactly the same way. All men may be involved of emotion, reason and will in response to the Holy, but personality is unique. As a consequence, the ritual we read about among the primitives is not always the same, the structure and form which Judaism took is not identical to religious expression as we know it in Christianity. The divergence of belief and practice among the living religions of the world, and for that matter, among the denominations found in Christendom, bears witness to the fact that the mentality of mankind is not identical.

That all men are not exactly alike of will, mind and



emotion need not disturb us too greatly however, for the important thing is that all religious experience points to a sacred center beyond man - a Supreme Being who is known by the whole personality to be Holy and who demands that man be likewise.

We believe that Christ is the final answer to the world's need however, for in Him the self dissolves. He said, "Be ye perfect as my Father in Heaven is perfect". Such a demand is impossible for man, but with God's help in Christ it may be a reality. You see, when we recognize what God has offered the world in the life and sufferings of Jesus, we become captive. The whole scene changes, instead of believing that we must find God and that we by our own striving must help others, we recognize that we have been found by God and that it is possible for us to live and work in fellowship with Him in relation to the welfare of all mankind. Christ becomes the giver and we become the gift. We give ourselves to the Holy that we might be a worthy gift of His to the world.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)





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